TESTS: Suzuki GS1000S Katana, Harley–Davidson FXRS, Honda XR250R, Italjet 350T, Kawasaki KZ305CSR

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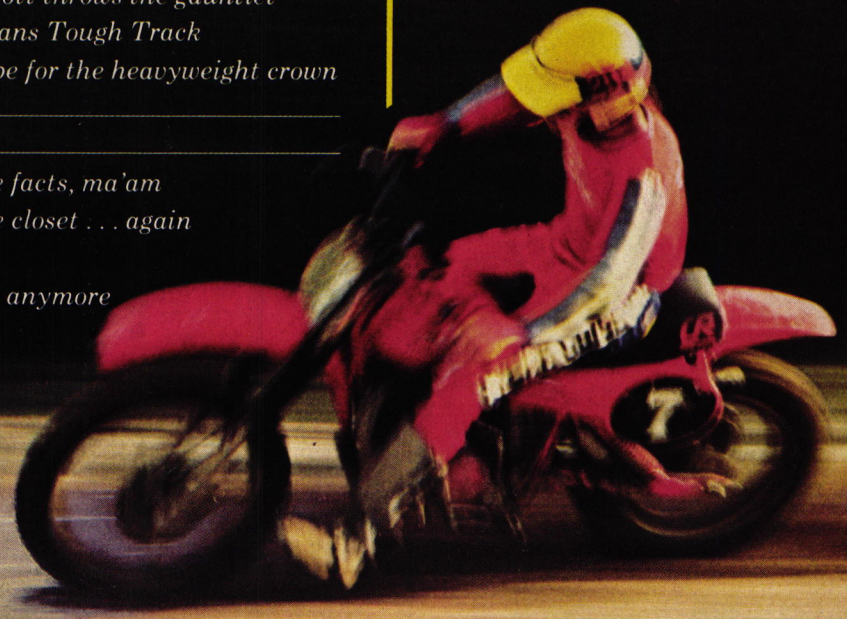
QUOTE:

"In the cold light of a boulevard night, all the other cruisers are just pretenders. And the FXRS is what they're pretending to be."
—Pg. 57



ON THE COVER:
Special-effects photographer Martin Sage had a close encounter of the four-cylinder kind with Suzuki's starship, the GS1000S Katana. Luckily, his trusty 4x5 Calumet was along to record the event.

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* Cycle Guide, Sept. '80. Cycle World, May '80, Oct. '80. Motorcyclist, Apr. '80. May '80, Feb. '81.

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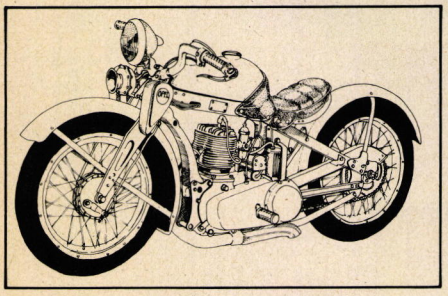

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OFF-ROAD

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	ENGINE TYPE	WHEEL TRAVEL, IN. FRONT/REAR	WEIGHT, LBS	HORSEPOWER @ RPM*		GEARS
Can-Am 250 MX-5	Jan. '79	Two-str.	10.8/10.0	218	32.1	8500	5
Can-Am 250 Qualifier III	Feb. '80	Two-str.	9.7/9.8	230	25.2	8000	6
Cam-Am 400 MX-6	June '80	Two-str.	11.5/10.8	233	38.3	6500	5
Honda CR125R	April '81	Two-str.	10.6/11.5	213	NA	NA	6
Honda CR250R	May '80	Two-str.	11.8/11.0	222	27.5	7000	5
Honda CR450R	Feb. '81	Two-str.	11.0/12.5	236	NA	NA	4
Honda XR200R	Sept. '81	Two-str.	9.0/10.2	228	NA	NA	6
Honda XR500R	Nov. '81	Four-str.	9.5/10.0	289	NA	NA	5
Husqvarna 125CR-'80	Nov. '79	Two-str.	11.8/11.8	214	18.8	11000	6
Husqvarna 250WR	July '81	Two-str.	9.5/10.3	248	20.9	7500	6
Husqvarna 420AXC	Oct. '80	Two-str.	11.5/11.9	239	NA	NA	4
Husqvarna 430CR	March '81	Two-str.	11.9/11.3	239	33.3	6500	6
Kawasaki KDX250	July '81	Two-str.	9.9/11.0	248	24.3	7000	6
Kawasaki KDX175	Dec. '80	Two-str.	9.6/9.8	222	15.3	8500	6
Kawasaki KX125 A7	Jan. '81	Two-str.	10.4/11.3	207	20.9	12000	6
Kawasaki KX250	Sept. '80	Two-str.	11.3/11.2	233	26.8	8000	5
Kawasaki KX420	July '80	Two-str.	11.0/11.3	250	34.0	7000	5
Maico 400 MI	April '80	Two-str.	12.3/12.0	233	35.5	7000	5
Maico 450 MI	April '80	Two-str.	12.3/12.0	236	37.0	7000	5
Montesa Cappra 414 VE	Oct. '79	Two-str.	10.9/10.7	236	28.5	6500	4
Suzuki PE400	Nov. '80	Two-str.	11.3/11.3	250	30.9	7000	5
Suzuki RM125X	June '81	Two-str.	10.8/11.7	205	20.7	11500	6
Suzuki RM250X	Oct. '81	Two-str.	10.5/11.3	219	NA	NA	5
Suzuki RM465X	Aug. '81	Two-str.	10.4/10.8	234	36.0	7000	5
Yamaha Pro-Tec 600	Nov. '79	Four-str.	10.5/10.1	262	46.2	6500	5
Yamaha IT250G	Dec. '79	Two-str.	9.8/9.8	244	27.7	8000	6
Yamaha TT250G	Aug. '80	Four-str.	8.8/7.5	242	17.7	8000	5
Yamaha YZ250G	March '80	Two-str.	11.2/11.6	217	29.6	8000	6
Yamaha IT465	May '81	Two-str.	10.0/11.4	247	38.1	6500	5
Yamaha YZ465H	Aug. '81	Two-str.	11.0/12.4	235	39.8	7000	5

*Horsepower shown is taken at the rear wheel and does not account for transmission losses between the engine and rear wheel. These results may differ from manufacturer's claims or from results obtained using a different dynamometer.

STREET

MAKE & MODEL	ISSUE	ENGINE TYPE*	QUARTER-MILE, SEC./MPH	TOP SPEED, MPH	WEIGHT, LBS	FUEL CONSUMPTION, MPG	STOPPING DISTANCE FROM 60 MPH, FT.
BMW R65	March '81	2C/G	14.16/92.1	110	423	45-50	133
BMW R100RS	May '81	2C/G	13.48/98.4	127	492	34-52	145
BMW R80 G/S	Nov. '81	2C/G	14.07/92.3	105	405	36-54	NA
H-D CLE Sidecar	Sept. '79	45-deg. 2D/F	17.60/69.3	91	1036	25-35	181
H-D Tour Glide	Sept. '80	45-deg. 2D/F	15.58/83.9	108	785	35-44	161
Honda CB400T Hawk	March '80	2A/F	14.37/88.6	100	391	51-65	139
Honda GL500 Interstate	Aug. '81	80-deg. 2E/G	14.88/86.4	96	517	39-53	140
Honda CX500 Turbo	Sept. '81	80-deg. 2E/G	NA	136	549	NA	NA
Honda CB750F	June '81	4A/F	12.40/108.3	118	526	38-53	126
Honda CB750C	Nov. '80	4A/F	12.68/105.3	128	530	39-46	131
Honda CB900F	July '81	4A/F	12.21/111.1	141	547	41-47	130
Honda GL1100 Interstate	Aug. '81	4C/G	13.37/99.7	130	691	39-44	148
Honda CBX	May '81	6A/F	12.01/113.9	136	646	23-40	130
Honda CB1100R	Nov. '81	4A/F	NA	155	518	31-48	NA
Kawasaki KZ440D	Feb. '81	2A/F	14.59/89.1	107	383	56-64	135
Kawasaki KZ550	Sept. '80	4A/F	13.45/97.1	103	426	37-51	150
Kawasaki GPz550	Sept. '81	4A/F	12.97/101.7	119	449	52-63	149
Kawasaki KZ750	June '81	4A/F	12.43/108.2	128	471	38-60	128
Kawasaki KZ1000J	Feb. '81	4A/F	11.62/116.3	130	521	30-51	135
Kawasaki KZ1100	April '81	4A/F	11.62/117.6	140	559	38-44	NA
Kawasaki GPz1100	July '81	4A/F	11.4/118.6	133	538	38-47	158
Kawasaki KZ1300A GT	Sept. '80	6A/G	12.71/107.4	135	730	31-45	146
R.C. Turbo CB750F	Oct. '80	4A/F	11.99/113.8	NA	523	27-39	135
Suzuki GS450ST	May '80	2A/F	14.09/92.5	100	397	55-57	127
Suzuki GS750EX	June '81	4A/F	12.26/108.6	128	525	44-52	130
Suzuki GS1000E	Aug. '80	4A/F	11.98/113.9	136	528	32-50	137
Suzuki GS1000G	Aug. '80	4A/G	12.34/110.8	139	564	30-51	141
Suzuki GS1100EX	July '81	4A/F	11.36/118.6	141	535	43-48	123
Suzuki GS1100 Twin Turbo	Oct. '81	4A/F	NA	172	548	NA	NA
Yamaha RD350LC	Dec. '80	Two-str. 2/AF	13.23/101.0	113	328	NA	126
Yamaha XJ550RH Seca	May '81	4A/G	12.99/101.7	121	418	44-55	119
Yamaha XJ650 Maxim I	June '80	4A/G	12.60/107.4	120	453	40-54	128
Yamaha XJ650	Nov. '80	4A/G	13.19/102.4	125	476	43-44	NA
Yamaha Seca 750	June '81	4A/F	12.26/108.0	128	495	44-56	134
Yamaha Virago	March '81	75-deg.2D/G	13.28/99.8	10	481	47-51	132
Yamaha XV920	Oct. '81	75-deg.2D/G	13.34/99.4	111	509	39-48	146
Yamaha XS1100LH	Jan. '81	4A/G	11.99/113.5	130	562	41-46	133

*A-Transverse Vertical, B-Vertical, (single-cylinder only), C-Horizontally Opposed, D-Tandem Vee, E-Transverse Vee, /F-Chain Final Drive, /G-Shaft Final Drive, /H-Belt Final Drive

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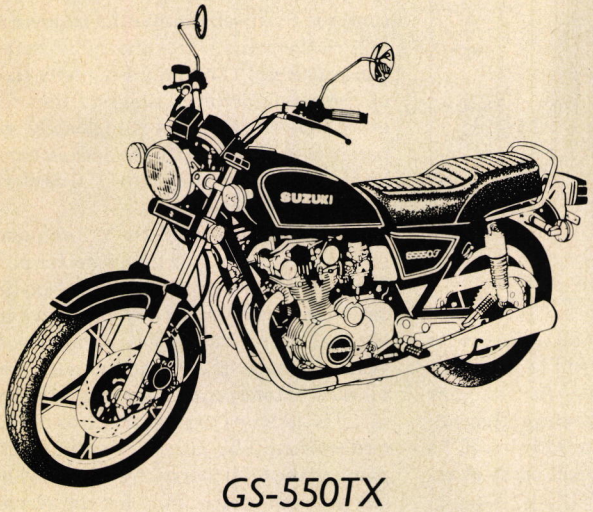

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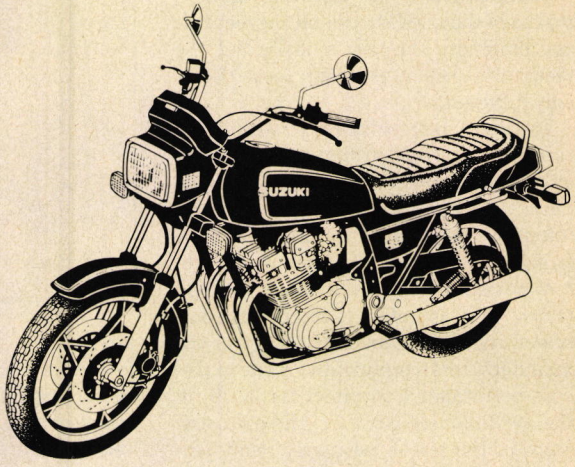

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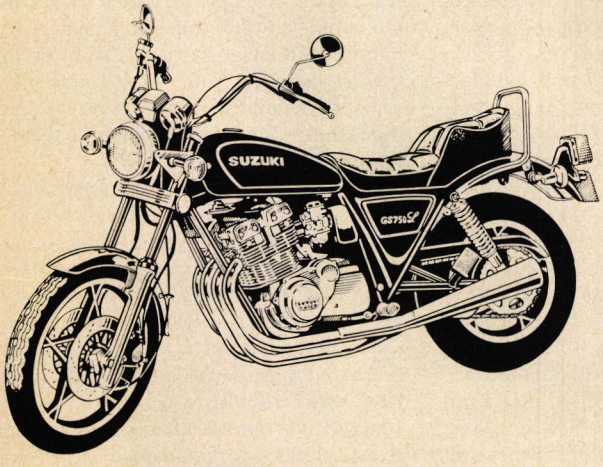

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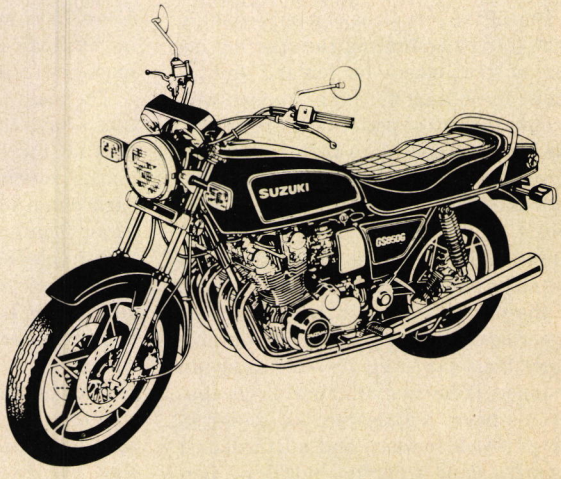


GS-850GX

*Manufacturer's new suggested retail price.

Editorial

Speed Merchants

Dust off your stopwatches; they've just come back in style.

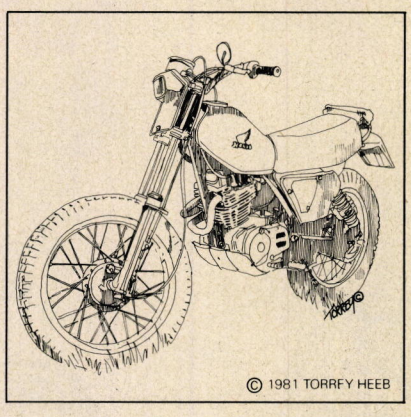
• Motorcycle dealerships will be flooring something new for 1982: lavishly displayed high performance for sale.

The fact that it's for sale is nothing new, except in the sizes, shape and the technology built into the new models. But the method of display promises to be decidedly different.

In recent moto-history, it wasn't the case that you couldn't find high-performance machinery, but what was on the block wasn't anywhere near as obvious in intent as the soon-to-be-current crop. A straight shot of performance was somehow not quite savory, it seemed. You had to *ask* for it, and often it was disguised as something less potent. Either that, or the manufacturers simply didn't want to discuss performance in direct terms. With the 1982 models, however, there's a new scent in the air—a positively risqué approach to it all.

For now, the game seems to have been thrown wide open. You'll find high performance festooned in dealerships, from the newfound gleam in the salesman's eye as he rattles off each model's statistics, to the shapes and configurations of the bikes themselves. None of the almost-apologies for pavement-ripping street bikes that have been mouthed in recent years are in evidence. In fact, the tables seem to be turned around completely. Sheer, abject performance is being deployed strategically these days. Like some sort of pheromone, it's being used to heighten the sensitivities and to draw in anyone close enough to sense the excitement.

One of the sure signs of a philosophical shift toward embracing the sporting nature of sport bikes—for fun and profit—shows up in manufacturers' sudden willingness to disclose performance figures for the new models. More than simple disclosure, really; they're gloating over performance data. Playing it out like card hands, all poker-faced until everything's on the table, then wide, knowing grins as the chips are swept up. Unlike the vogue of the past few years, it has become *de rigeur* again to bandy about quarter-mile times. Horsepower figures—of late all but dropped from manufacturers' vocabularies—have reappeared as motorcycling's stock market, and all the latest averages show a market bullish on performance. By all accounts, the floodgates for corporate acceptance of performance



are down; in fact, for 1982, it begins to look as if elapsed times will become motorcycling's legal tender. As the year wears on, there's every promise that advertisements will begin to trade low E.T.s back and forth like baseball cards at recess.

To find further evidence that street performance has cyclically re-emerged from the closet, you need look no further than the new machines themselves. Honda's lightspeed CX500 Turbo cracked open the door for a resurgence of high performance for sale, but the door was quickly flung open and wedged in place by other manufacturers as well. Like Honda, Yamaha settled on turbocharging as the go-fast solution, though in an air-cooled format. And Suzuki's sport-only Katana 1000 stands as testimony that conventional aspiration and a hotrod motor are still an acceptable recipe for quick—and to quicken the blood. Kawasaki's line of 550cc, 750cc and 1100cc GPzs shows nothing less than a willingness to produce raciness in a variety of sizes.

The plain fact that all these manufacturers have chosen different angles of attack on the highly visible performance market is nowhere near as telling as *why* each chose to cater to the sport buyer: More than ever before, street-shredding motorcycles have become desirable statements of corporate identity. Being able to go fast has become synonymous with a manufacturer's ability to propel you at speed.

What all this hyperbole doesn't mean is that ultrafast sport-only motorcycles will soon own the pavement. Not by a long shot. Not even by a quarter-mile. For all the attention being paid to performance machinery, all evidence from the manufacturers shows that the status is likely to remain quo. Despite protestations of disbelief by sport riders, factory-custom versions of almost any given model will continue to outsell the sportier configuration of the same bike—and by no small margin, either. The combined intelligence of the manufacturers suggests that for every CB750F, say, that is so flashily apparent as it slips through the apexes, twice as many CB750Cs will cross the dealer's threshold on the way out.

What, then, does all the effort going into ever-more-quantifiably-better performance street bikes mean? Maybe, given those sales ratios, it counts as a daring marketing strategy to combat soft sales. Perhaps the manufacturers' rekindled attention to high-performance metal is designed to push that two-to-one custom/flashbike ratio to the limit, expanding the total market by force-feeding one segment and waiting for the rest to grow. Whatever, it will be hard to prove—or disprove—for years to come. But these days there are a lot of hard smiles across corporate boardrooms, and a lot of quiet talk about the "long view."

But until all the votes—as tabulated through sales figures, market shares and growth curves—are in, this renewed devotion to sporting machinery can still be counted as more than market trendiness. It is a sure sign that motorcycling is coming of age. The best industry forecasters these days suggest that many of motorcycling's growing pains are finally subsiding. Each year, they say, there will be fewer fits and starts that play out on the showroom floor. Fewer attempts to redirect an entire model line toward some new goal. And more of a realization that a motorcycle market demands both general and specialized machinery in order to satisfy the needs and wants of increasingly sophisticated motorcyclists.

Of course, the real benefits of motorcycling's transition into adulthood don't end up as some highly elaborate marketing game played by the manufacturers. The "long view" has payoffs for you every time your moto-fantasies get translated into rolling reality on the showroom floor—an event that seems far more likely with each new model year. And besides, a highly competitive market that nurtures the growth of such technomarvelous devices as 1982's flashbikes is anything but dull.

—Larry Works

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Racy mid-sized lightweight touring fairing attractively combines comfort and aerodynamics. Documented increases in mileage after installation. Available in black, white or silver. Shipped complete.

Options:

Wing Tips	$19.95
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Tall Shield add	$ 5.95

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The Vetter "Set-Up." Unique styling. Coaxes cargo weight forward for better handling. Easily detachable, large capacity bags with floating mount system for vibration isolation. Includes bags, hardware and luggage rack.

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Complete your "Set-Up" with Vetter's own large, easy access Tail Trunk. Or, the Tail Trunk can simply mount to your own rack. Includes taillights and mounting hardware.

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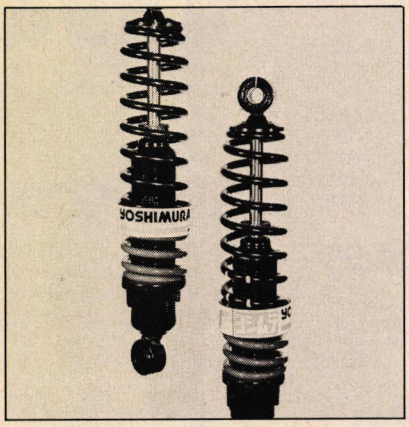
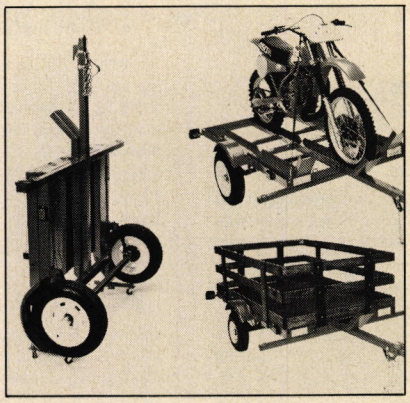
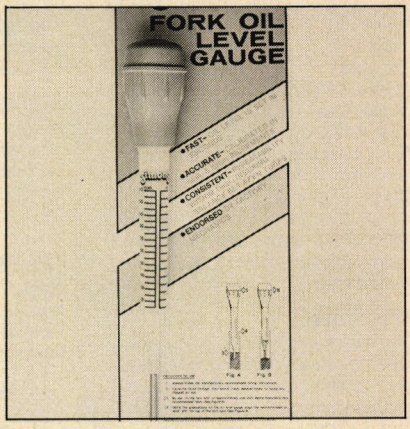
Taking the Lumps: Yoshimura R&D has teamed up with S&W Engineered Products to offer street shocks with dual-rate springs that fill the gap between stock suspension and Yoshimura's top-of-the-line KYB roadracing units. The Stroker shocks are available for most multi-cylinder machines and retail for $146.00. For more information, call or write Yoshimura R&D, 4555 Carter Court, Dept. CG, Chino, California 91710; (714) 628-4722.





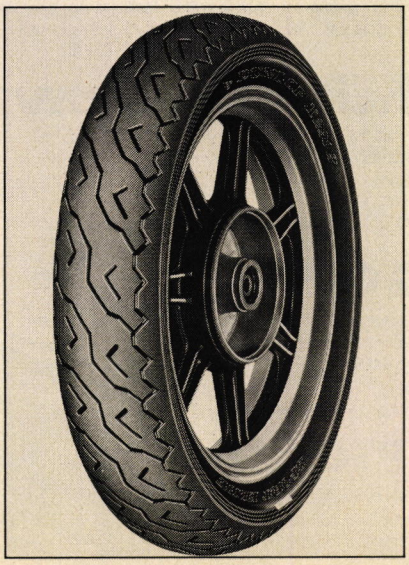
Tote 'n Fold: The new Baja three-rail motorcycle trailer is capable of fitting into a 20-inch-wide space in the corner of your garage when its services are not in demand. It can be folded into its compact form in less than 10 seconds without the use of tools or black magic and sells for $559.00. Innovations in Service Equipment, Incorporated, will tell you all about the Baja if you call (303) 371-1029 or write I.S.E., Inc., Dept. CG, 12850 E. 40th Ave. #98, Denver, Colorado 80239.

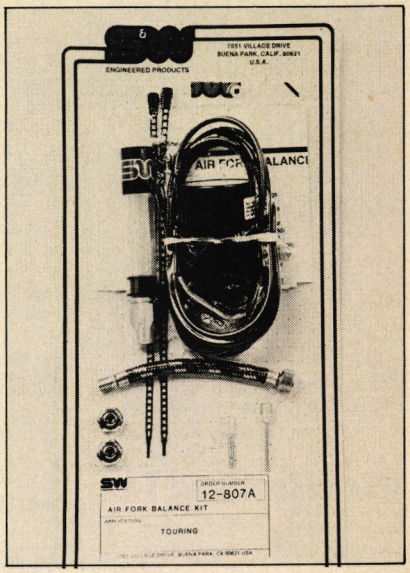
Measuring Up: A device for adjusting the amount of oil in your bike's fork is available from S.W. Simons, Incorporated. It slides down your fork tube to siphon out oil in excess of any given level between 4.5 inches and 8.25 inches. Calibration is also given in millimeters. Simons' oil-level gauge can be found at your dealer or from 2625 Miller Ave., Dept. CG, Mountain View, California 94040. The phone number is (415) 984-3470.



Sound Traps: Discojet Corporation is the proud father of an entire line of muffler/spark-arrester combinations for four-stroke singles. The claimed increase of up to five horsepower and maintainance-free SuperTrapp construction have long been available for 500cc thumpers, and now the line expands to include Suzuki DRs and SPs as well as all Honda XLs and XRs from the 185 on up. The four-inch-diameter unit also bolts onto 1977 and later Yamaha TT and XT 500s and both versions of the new 250. SuperTrapp exhaust systems are available from your dealer or from Discojet Corp., Dept. CG, 920 Third St., Davis, California 95616.

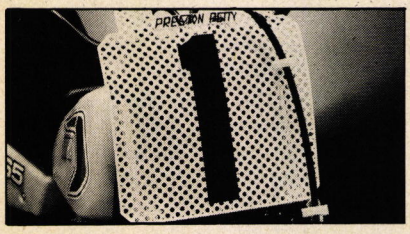
Road Rubber: A high-performance, R-compound tire is available from Dunlop. The K291 Sport Elite has already won numerous races during its development. Now you can purchase it in the following sizes: 100/90V19, 110/90V19, 120/80V18, 130/80V18, 140/80V18 and 130/90V17. See your dealer or contact Dunlop directly: Dept. CG, P.O. Box 1109, Buffalo, New York 14240; (716) 879-8200.

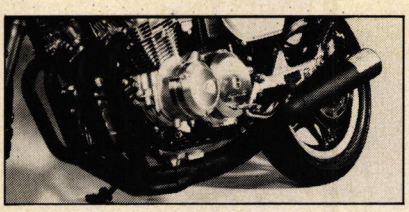




Balance Act: S&W's air fork balance kit bolts to stock air fork caps to provide equal air pressure in your bike's fork legs. A handlebar-mounted gauge that measures up to 100 psi as well as a portable mini-pump are included in the kit. For more information, contact S&W Engineered Products, Dept. CG, 7051 Village Dr., Buena Park, California 90621.

Numero Uno? The Holeshot number plate, made by Preston Petty, is 10 inches by 11 inches and allows air to flow through the zillions of octagonal holes in its surface. And since the only solid item on the plate is the number, it remains visible even through a layer of mud. The number plate comes in black, white and yellow and sells for $12.95. Holeshot also makes plastic numbers 8½ inches high for less than $2 each, made especially to fit into the number plates' design of holes. The numbers are available in black and white, and you can purchase the Holeshot plate and numbers from dealers or directly from Preston Petty Products, P.O. Box 4158, Dept. CG, Scottsdale, Arizona 85258. Phone toll-free at (800) 852-7777 (operator 303) or (800) 824-7888.



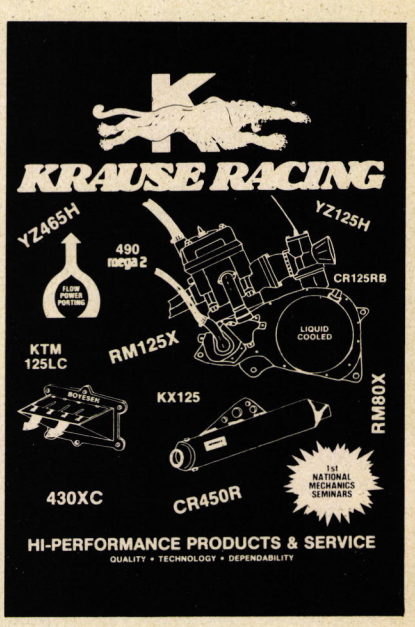


Smoking Your Pipes: You can bolt a set of Bassani Superbike pipes onto just about any late model Japanese Four. Designed for performance, Bassani claims measurable improvement: quarter-mile elapsed times drop half a second on the average, and trap speeds increase six to seven mph. The pipes come standard in a plasma-coated aluminum finish, but you can special order chrome for $40 more. You can bolt a set of superbike pipes on a Honda CB750F in about 30 minutes, according to the manufacturer, but before you do, check your local noise ordinances. The pipe's suggested retail price is $225 from your local dealer or directly from Bassani. Just write: Bassani Manufacturing, 3726 East Miraloma, Dept. CG, Anaheim, California 92806: or phone (714) 630-1821.

A Pad on the Back: Custom Dressers produces a chromed backrest for Honda Silver Wings. It includes a pad that matches the seat and a Silver Wing emblem. Attach it to the passenger's seat and remove it with the seat. A chrome-plated luggage rack also fits onto the backrest. It can be purchased at dealers for $89.95 or from Custom Dressers, Dept. CG, 2702 S. High Ave., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73129; the phone is (405) 672-7564.

Visor Art: Whether you're looking somewhere over the rainbow or whether you're looking for the silver lining, Malcolm Smith can provide you with rainbow decals for your visor or silver-bordered decals. The decals can also be applied to helmets, fenders or side panels—wherever your riding could use some color. They may be purchased from Malcolm Smith dealers or from the firm directly, by writing to Malcolm Smith. 7563 Indiana, Dept. CG, Riverside, California 92504; phone (714) 686-1006.

Support Your Local Feet: Lace and velcro combine to support your ankles, helping them to endure the most demanding motocross. D.G. Performance Specialties distributes the boots and Sidi makes the super-pro racing boot. Retail price for a pair is $159 at motorcycle and accessory shops. Or you can contact the firm directly: D.G. Performance Specialties, 1230 La Loma Circle, Dept. CG, Anaheim, California 92806. The phone number is (714) 630-5471.



Fast Reading: Now you can cruise through the pages of Krause Racing's catalog. From engine repair to carryalls, there's a tempting variety of goodies displayed. To receive your high-performance catalog, send $3.50 to Krause Racing, 305 North Ave., Dept. CG, Northlake, Illinois 60104; phone (312) 344-2233.

The Larson View

Alice

A woman who understood playing around.

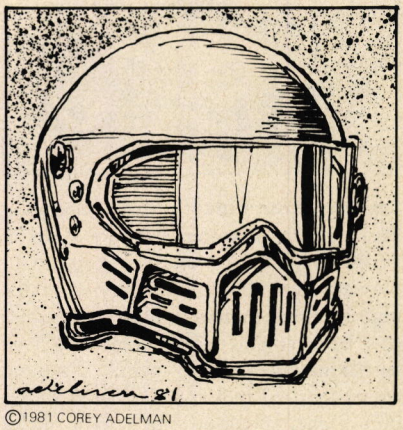
• Read the other day where the court said that women could sue their employers if they could prove they were being paid less money for equal work. Seems fair. Women take their battle for equality to fields of combat where they believe they can win, and that's just smart strategy. Jobs and economics both have yardsticks—numbers that lawyers can point to and argue about. And maybe even win.

What interests me more is how women interact when ideology is not so ready a handle, as for example in forms of recreation. As for example, with respect to motorcycles. Everybody's gotta work, and women have found out that nothing's worse than boring work or work that makes you look and feel dumb, so they rightly ask that they not be so specifically selected for work that is *both* boring and dumb. Too, they figure that if they're as good as a man, the pay should be the same.

But nobody puts a gun to your head and makes you *play*. Forget college and pro sports for a minute, because that has more to do with work than it has to do with play. I'm talking about what you do when nobody's looking, what you do just to laugh, what you do with your time when you *don't* work. That—at least to me—is play, and it can be almost anything from tuning your car to programming your computer to riding your motorcycle.

So how come nobody has taken a serious look at the ways women play and applied the observations therefrom to some common-sense judgments about equality? Since this is not an ideological magazine, but a magazine about play, specifically the play that revolves around two-wheeled machines that make certain folks giggle like pleasure-crazed lunatics, I feel relatively comfortable stating something which I think we all know: Not very many women ride. By ride, of course, I mean what you and I mean when we say ride. We do *not* mean the seat in back; we mean the one in front next to the handlebar.

So far as I know, women are as free as I am to walk into a motorcycle store, buy anything in sight, obtain a license, and ride the public roads. Yet very few do, and I find that interesting. Not cosmic or anything, but just interesting. If you play through the orthodox feminist ideology in your head, you would guess that women might be battering at the stereotype that has kept them off motorcycles, a sort of macho haven if ever there were one, yet



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they don't. Search the Sun Belt and you will find no headlong rush of ladies to the motorcycle store.

Now treasure this, because now that we're talking about it, it might not last long: The reason the business of women and motorcycles hasn't happened yet is simply that nobody has made an issue out of it. The closest any woman has come to drawing public attention to her relationship with a motorcycle is the whole Ballad of Joan Claybrook *shtick* and those sweeties on the covers of *Easyriders*.

Which means, dear friends, that nobody has screwed up the picture. Which means that when it comes to women and motorcycles, the whole thing is still kind of innocent, pure and wonderful. The only women who come to motorcycles are the ones who feel like it in the first place, which makes it spontaneous, free of ideology and, therefore, absolutely wonderful.

I remember the first woman I ever saw really ride and ride well. We'll call her Alice. She was about a year ahead of me in college, and according to the doctrine (mostly learned in high school) she was a dog. I mean, Alice was definitely no beauty, and the house wiseguy labeled her "satchel-ass," a term which stuck.

See, there was a certain competitiveness in the air in those times that tended to bring out the meanness in people. Anybody who didn't quite fit in was considered fair game, and Alice sure didn't fit any molds I'd ever seen. As if plain looks weren't bad enough, this lady had one of those personalities that maybe Joe Stalin would have liked a lot.

But all in life is not simple, and Alice was no exception. Alice was one of those rare people with combined talents of competency and leadership. In a word, she was a boss. I couldn't help notice, for example, that whenever the drama club's productions got into trouble, they'd call Alice. And Alice would get down there and kick ass, all the while reading her notes for tomorrow's quiz on phenomenology as she issued orders to stage hands.

The time I first saw her ride is still as clear as if it were yesterday. She had one of those rooster-red Ducatis that were coming into the States in the early Sixties, and below her goggles her face was filmed with the dark gray that told you she'd just covered a lot of road. She wore loose coveralls—probably the only thing that fit her figure—and various knapsacks and knitted shoulder bags were strapped behind her in a heap, Okie style. She had the look of a lumberjack just down for the weekend from Chibougamou.

There's a traffic circle right there in the middle of town—at least there was—and Alice just laid that Ducati flat down and sort of dipped through the circle as if it weren't there. Mind you, Alice rolled her own Bull Durham cigarettes out of the little cloth bag, and in those days, stuff like that passed for affectation. I kind of figured she was just trying hard to be different in an age when it was hard to stand out from the crowd. But I know better now. Alice just wanted to do things for the sake of doing things that were hard to do, and for the sake of doing them well.

Motorcycles reek with "image" in a world where driving cars is normal, so it was easy to confuse Alice's motives. At the time, the fact that she rode, and rode seriously, made it seem to us that she was coming on strong, and instead of simply observing her on her Ducati and admiring her skill with it, we asked instead why she was doing it. What was she up to anyway? But then, the wonderful thing about Alice was that she didn't give a squat what we thought, anyway.

So thanks, Alice. Thanks for pointing out to at least one sophomore that there was more to womanhood than cheerleaders and stewardesses. That was all they gave us up until then in high school, so how were we to know better? You gave me the first hint that the thing that goes on between men and women is at its best when people just leave it alone and enjoy it. That's what playing around is all about. It's when people are truthful.

—George Larson

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Then we put in huge, 5″-wide leg gussets; Velcro-sealed flaps; two-way zippers; nylon-shielded knit collars; storm cuffs; and "the largest wind flap" *Rider* has ever seen.

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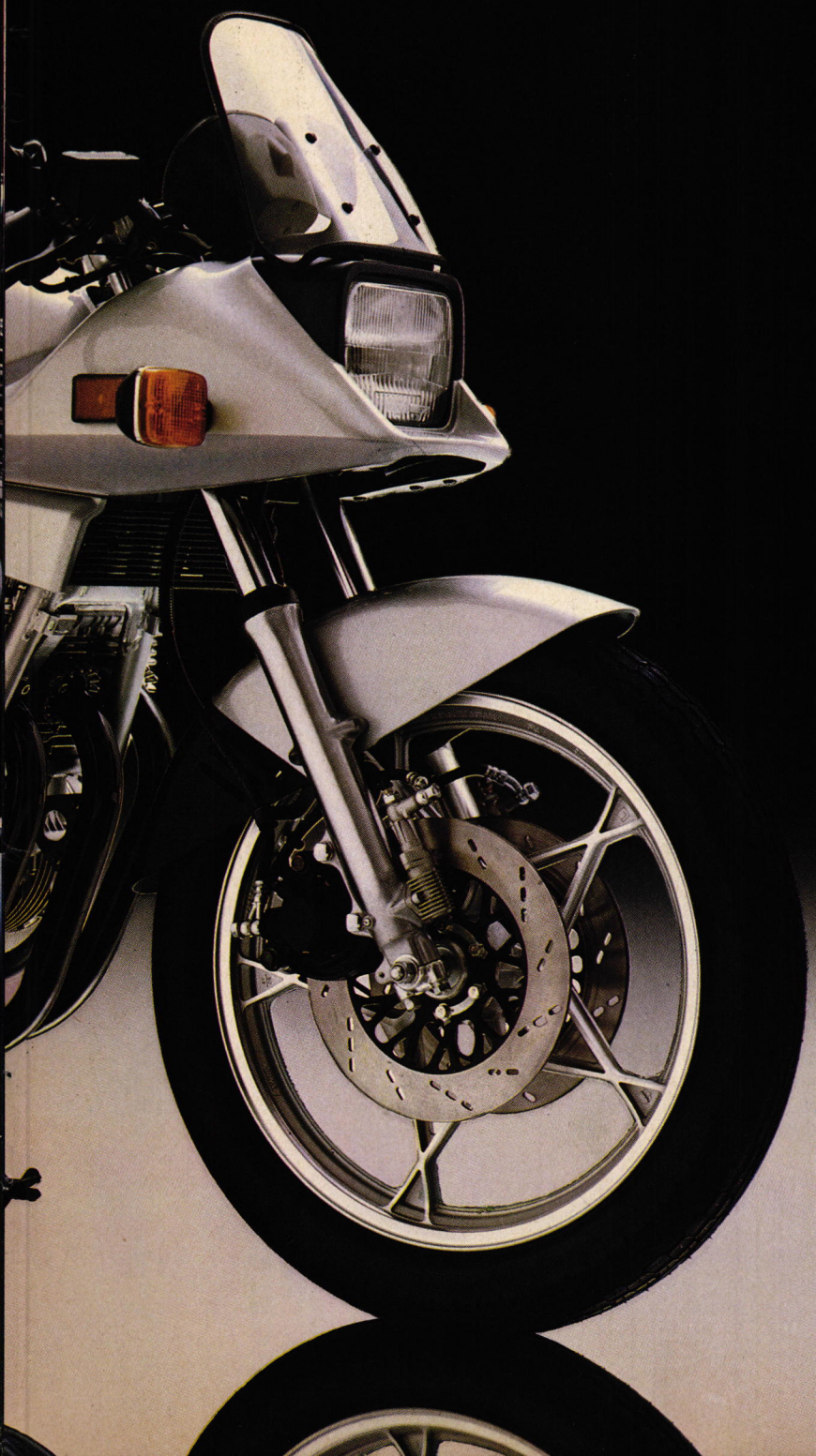

Imagine the thrill of owning the most innovative road machine the world has ever seen. The 1982 GS-1000S Katana.

It could be yours—along with everything else you see pictured. When you win the incredible Katana Sweepstakes.

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Sidecars as Sportscars

Beyond the E-Type.

• A lot of my car-freak friends who have recently discovered motorcycling have decided that motorcycles are the sportscars of the times. Because most of these guys came from pretty much the same auto-world, what they mean is that the thrill they get from clipping apexes on their GS11s and SR500s is much like the thrill they got from getting all sideways in their Bugeyes or TR4s or 356 Porsches. I can see their point, of course; most of today's cars, no matter how civilized, how mechanically brilliant or how cornerwise, are pretty sluggish devices.

My car pals go on to elaborate their notion: The bike is spartan, just like that old MGA; it's easy to understand, like a Sunbeam Alpine; and it only holds two people. Ergo, without any affordable open-top modern versions of narrow-tired, elbows-out, Nardi-wheeled, Talbot-mirrored and Amco-knob-shifted sportscars, your average Honda CB750F is the next best thing. Better, some now say.

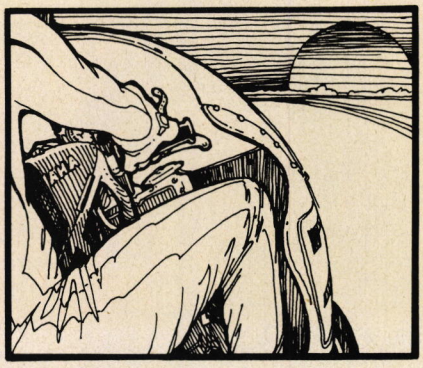
But, they're wrong. The sportscar of the eighties isn't a motorcycle. It's a sidecar.

I would have found that a particularly hard chunk to swallow myself, were it not for the trip I just completed to Alaska and the rally I just attended. Both affairs were sidecar shows. And cumulatively, they convinced me.

Like most solo riders, before I drove the 4200 miles with one from L.A. to Anchorage, I didn't much care for sidecars. In my case, the reason wasn't some deeply-buried question of self-image, but the problems the things had always given me on racetracks while I was campaigning a GP bike. The sidecars always left huge oil slicks on the corners. And rubber. *Lots* of rubber. Hence my distaste.

The first thousand miles of life with the sidecar I was bolted up to on the Alaska trip did nothing substantial to alter my dislike for them in general. It seemed to transform my solo mount—a flashfast Kawasaki KZ1100A—from a thoroughbred to a cart horse. I thought I could sense its spirit being broken every time a corner hove into view and I wrenched it through, flatly, instead of leaning it gracefully over the way God and the men in Hamamatsu had intended. For the first thousand miles, the sidecar made me sore—literally. My muscles ached in places I didn't know existed.

All through this period the sidecar had drawn stares like Lady Godiva on Main



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Street in Sioux Falls, of course, but such was my funk that I didn't care. Let 'em stare, I thought. Let the girls flutter their eyelashes in hopes of a sidecar jaunt. What did they know? The thing *ruined* a solo rider's day. Therefore, it was no damn good. Humph.

The road got difficult and then more difficult until finally, somewhere south of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, on a twilit midnight stretch next to a towering granite mountain and a wild river, it just became a deep bed of crushed rock and dirt. The sidecar went completely out of control and I slammed it into a berm on the ohmigod side of the road and I figured, Yep, damn thing's no good.

It wasn't until Anchorage that I realized what a jerk I'd been. The thing had gone out of control in loose dirt up to the axles and I'd been doing about 60 mph at the time. At midnight. Hmmm.

Basic difference between cars and bikes, Section One: Cars slide and spin when you screw up; bikes fall over. Basic Difference Two: accommodation and convenience. The list goes on, but the point's the same: No motorcycle is *ever* going to be more than a distant cousin to a car.

But a sidecar . . . aye, there's the hub. Add that axle and you get a new world. In my funk, I thought it was the *worst* of the car and bike worlds. But now I'm not so sure. At that rally I saw whole families clamber out of Watsonians and Globes and Urals. I saw spindly wire wheels and knock-offs and wicker picnic baskets and radios and driving lights and even Brooklands windshields.

Today's motorcycles are so fast and so well-finished that you can do things with a Suzuki GS11 clamped to a Watsonian that would make an Alfa Giulia Spider owner furious. Your engine blows his out of the water, for starters, so even two- (or three-) up, you can hurtle down the straight like his old nemesis, the Musclecar. But unlike the Musclecar, you do it at 40 mpg. You also have the joy of open-top motoring and Coventry Climax-style engines.

And the corners? Okay, so he can slide his Alfa around on those Pirelli Cinturatos pretty nice, all elbows and slip angles. So can you, once you get over your novice fears. Like: the Tent-Peg Death Roll, in which the sidecar wheel comes up on the hard righthander and keeps coming and the whole rig just tumbles over the high side into the hospital. And like the Wheel-Waggle Into Oblivion on left handers. Well, relax. I stood around all day at a rally and grilled people for their worst-ever accidents. Result: not one tent-peg. Not even hearsay tent-pegs. The president of the United Sidecar Association drives home the point about sidecar safety by reciting the Writ According to the Brits, Who Invented It All in the First Place: In Britain, where sidecars make up as much as 20 percent of the non-four-wheel population, you get an automatic 50-percent cut in your insurance costs when you bolt a sidecar up to your bike. So slide away.

What you've got, in a modern sidecar combination, is a stone-reliable, ultrafast, super-exotic solo bolted up to any kind of sidecar you want, from Buck Rogers to Great Gatsby—all for the price of a Toyota Corolla Strippo. You've got cornering by slip angles (instead of bank angles), real open-top driving, provision for provisions *and* a family, comfortably arrayed over your solo and/or one-, two- or even three-place sidecar, good fuel economy and something your wife can drive without fear of falling over. Naturally, as with sportscars, you can't just jump in. There's a whole world of time-proven tricks, a new lexicon of jargon (like "lead" and, yes, "tent-peg") to fathom. As in the days of the MG-TD, the hardware is only part of the package.

One more thing. Driving a slick sidecar today is the equivalent of owning the only red Jaguar XK-E in town. And the XK-E, you'll recall, was instantly—and properly—christened "The Greatest Crumpet Collector Known to Man." So, like the sportscar, a sidecar isn't just good for hauling families. It's unmatched for starting them, too. Try *that* on your 750F.

—*Steve Thompson*

Building these is a lot like racing them; you can't quit while you're ahead.

YAMAHA
YAMAHA
YAMAHA
1
1
YPVS

Always wear a helmet and eye protection. Specifications are subject to change without notice.

Introducing the 1982 YZ's.

The motocross machine that goes fast enough and handles well enough hasn't been built yet.

It probably never will be.

But, every year, one comes close.

Almost always, its initials are YZ. And it's built by Yamaha.

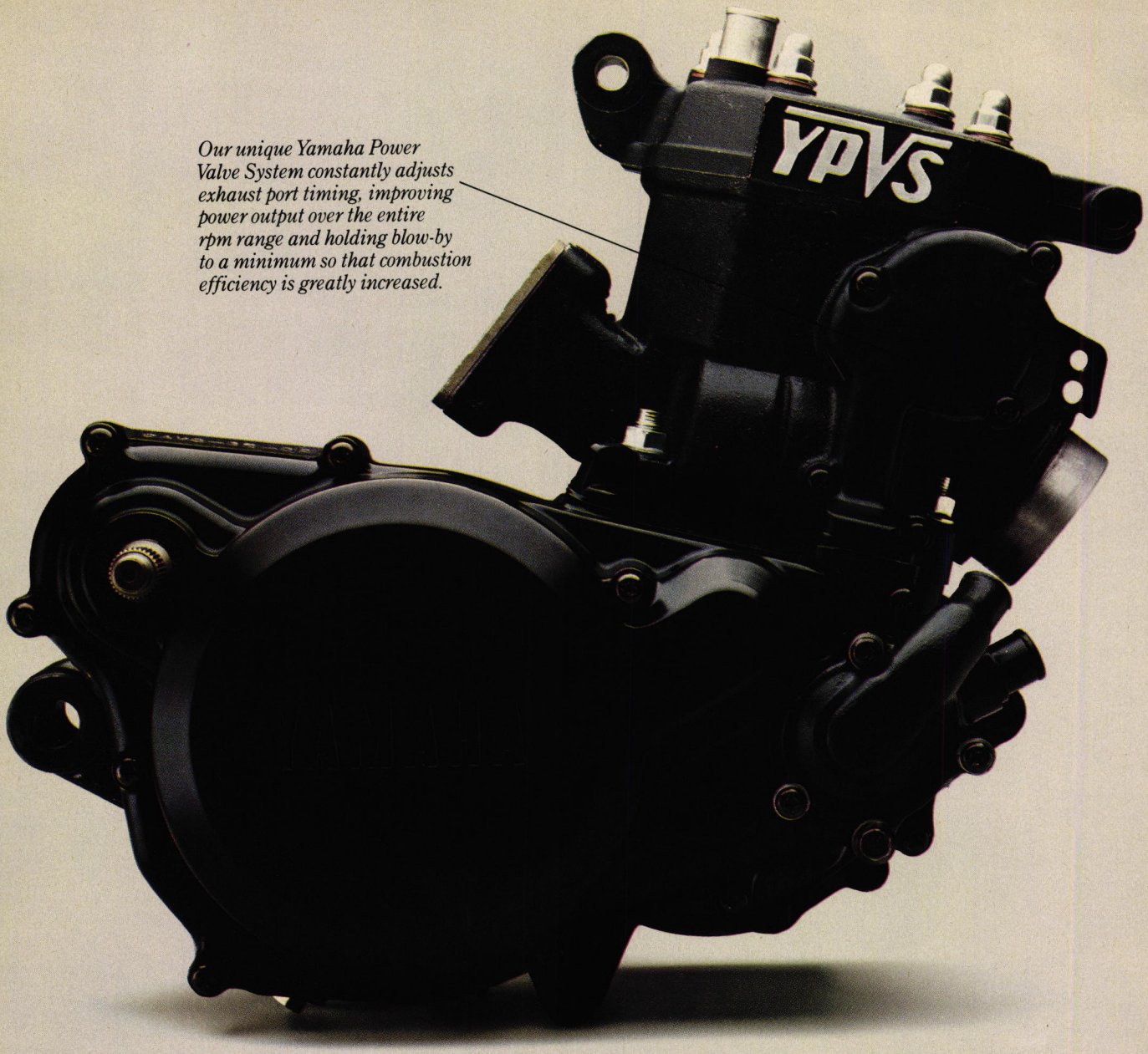
The reason Yamahas come out ahead might be because they start out ahead.

This year's YZ's are no exception.

They've got features that are years ahead of anything you're likely to see from the competition.

Innovations that make for faster engines, more suspension and better handling. Innovations that add up to the absolute finest racing machines ever to come from Yamaha.

Or anyone else.



Our unique Yamaha Power Valve System constantly adjusts exhaust port timing, improving power output over the entire rpm range and holding blow-by to a minimum so that combustion efficiency is greatly increased.

Introducing the only motocross bikes that come with two engines.

The two-stroke engine is almost perfect for motocross. It's lightweight, compact, powerful and easy to cool.

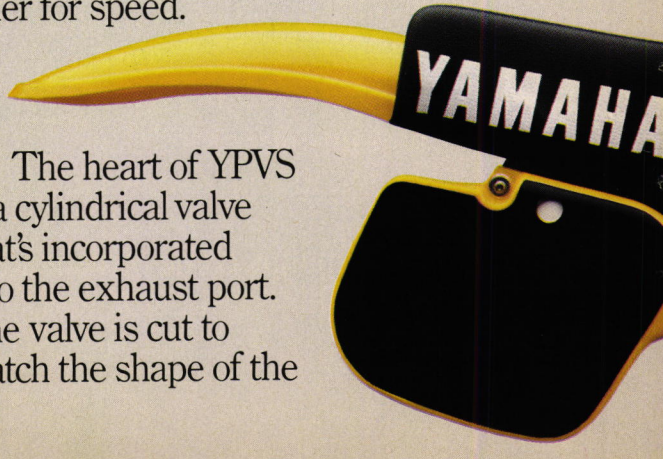
Now, about the "almost."

With the typical two-stroke engine you have to set the exhaust timing for one of two things: low-end torque or high-end speed. Or, find a happy medium and lose a little on both ends.

As you might expect, we've got a new approach.

Our new YPVS on the YZ125 and YZ250.

YPVS translates into Yamaha Power Valve System. And that translates into getting two engines in one. One set for torque, the other for speed.



The heart of YPVS is a cylindrical valve that's incorporated into the exhaust port. The valve is cut to match the shape of the

YZ490

YZ250

YZ125

YZ100

port and rotates to reduce or increase the exhaust port height, which, in turn, changes the exhaust timing.

And you don't have to lift a finger.

Just twist the throttle and YPVS automatically gives you plenty of torque at low rpm and plenty of speed at high rpm. All the while, improving overall power output, combustion efficiency, and, wonder of wonders, gas mileage.

As if adding brand new suspension on almost every new YZ and building an extra engine into two of them weren't enough, we threw in a couple more new tricks, too.

Like a YZ80 and 250 that run on water. What our unique water-cooling did for last year's

YZ80

YZ60

YZ125 it now does for the 80 and the 250: makes them go much faster. Much longer.

As for our big bore YZ, it's now got a bigger bore.

487cc's of mud-slinging, berm-busting muscle that combine with a new wide-ratio 4-speed transmission to keep the maxi-YZ right where it's always been.

At the top of the open class.

A new, works-style seat extends up the fuel tank to give you more freedom of movement. Not to mention extra comfort and protection where it counts.

Yamaha makes a pivotal discovery.

Seven years ago, while the competition was trying to perfect the two-shock rear suspension system, Yamaha threw one shock away, made the other one bigger and introduced a simpler more efficient system called Monocross.

The rest was victory.

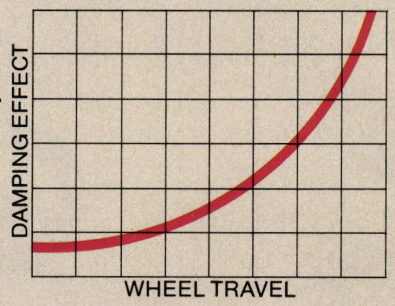
After victory. After victory.

And while YZ riders were out winning, we were out improving Monocross. We added travel every year. We increased the shock damping. We gave it more adjustability.

This year, we changed it so much, you won't even recognize it.

Of course, the shock is still up under the gas tank. And there's more travel than ever before. Added damping. And more adjustability. But there's something else too.

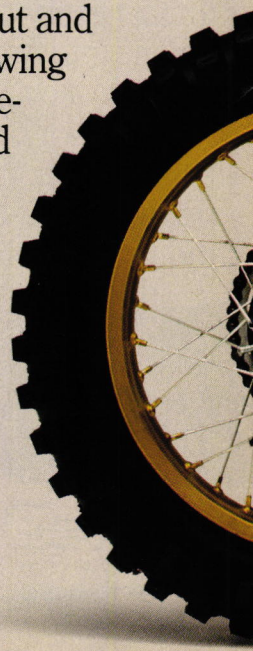
A pivot arm. And while it looks simple enough, that pivot arm, combined with an I-beam strut and a new extra-stiff swing arm provides something that's elluded engineers for years.



A true rising-rate suspension system.

What rising-rate means to suspension is simple.

At rest, the suspension is extremely soft. As the rear wheel begins to move upward,



the suspension begins to stiffen. The farther the rear wheel travels, the stiffer both the spring rate and the shock damping become.

What rising-rate means to you is the best of both worlds.

Smooth, supple action over small stutter bumps and whoop-de-doos. Stiffer, more solid response for deep ruts and big jumps.

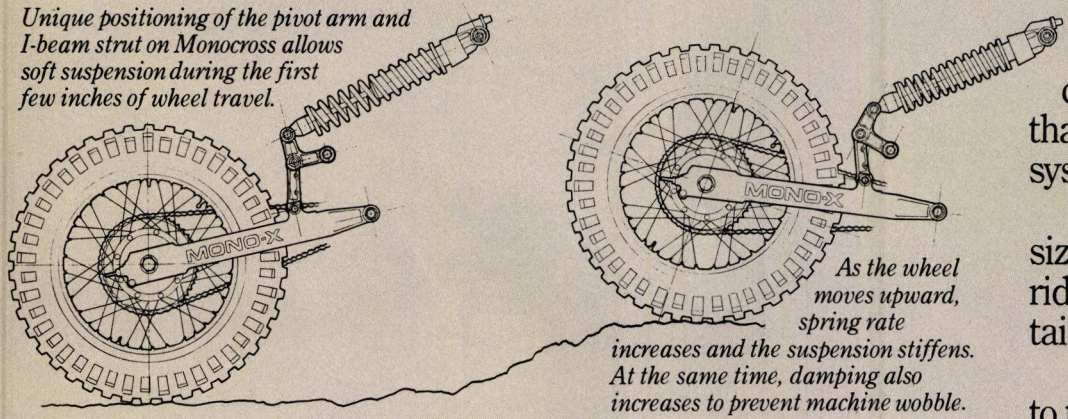
As a result, the rear wheel stays in contact with Mother Earth longer than ever, so you can go faster than ever. Over more kinds of terrain than ever.

And not only does Monocross now offer rising-rate suspension, it's also got more adjustments than you could use in a month of Sundays.

While most systems have adjustments for rebound damping and pre-load only, Monocross offers rebound damping, preload *and* compression damping adjustments. A total of 35 settings that make Monocross more adjustable than any suspension system on two wheels.

So no matter what size you are or where you ride, Monocross can be tailored to fit your needs.

Of course, there's more to the new Monocross system than meets the eye. Just cast yours on the conveniently exposed YZ below, and you'll see what we mean.



Unique positioning of the pivot arm and I-beam strut on Monocross allows soft suspension during the first few inches of wheel travel.

As the wheel moves upward, spring rate increases and the suspension stiffens. At the same time, damping also increases to prevent machine wobble.

In addition to the rebound damping adjustment, Monocross features a 10-stage compression damping adjustment for a total of 35 different settings.

On the YZ125 and 250 the frame actually carries water for the cooling system.

The damper adjusting rod inside the Monoshock is made of a magnesium alloy to prevent heat and high oil temperature from affecting damping.

To match the new rear suspension, the front forks have 300mm of terrain-eating travel.

Full floating rear brake makes braking smooth and predictable.

Remote reservoir provides the Monoshock with plenty of oil for reduced heat and consistent damping.

Extra heavy-duty, box section swing arm is reinforced to keep flex to a minimum.

The single-down-tube cradle frame is light, strong chrome-moly. It provides a low seat position and low center of gravity.

Every YZ comes with its own pit crew.

TEAM YAMAHA CENTER

At Yamaha, we realize that the best way to keep you out in front is to stand behind you.

That's why at many Yamaha dealers you'll find our Team Yamaha Centers. Here you can get up-to-the-minute, detailed information about outfitting and fine-tuning your bike for competition.

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And if you're in need of some really fast answers, the Team Yamaha Center has a direct line to Yamaha's Engineering department. So your dealer can get all the information you need. When you need it.

Team Yamaha Centers even receive Yamaha race result mailgrams. To keep you posted on the National standings.

And give you something to shoot for.

YAMAHA

THE WAY IT SHOULD BE.

GUIDE LINES

Cycle Guide's Monthly Chronicle of Scoops, Tips, Rumors and Hard Facts

BY DAVID DEWHURST

COMING SOON

• If you just heard a loud thump, don't be alarmed; it was just the corporate jaw of every major motorcycle manufacturer dropping onto his boardroom table. The opposition has just seen **Honda's** new model line for '82, and it might be enough to make your jaw drop, too.

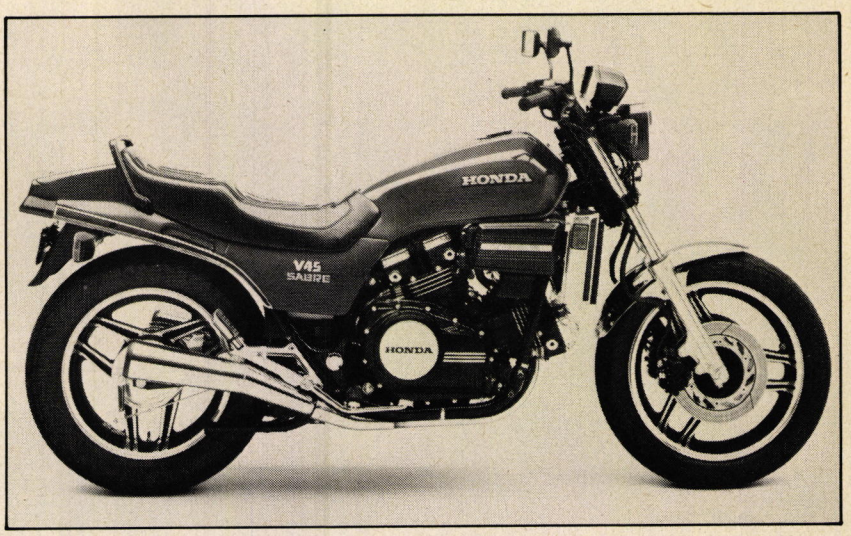
Your lips will certainly start quivering when you see an all-new 750cc **vee-four.** Just like the NR500 that Fast Freddie rides, Honda's new V45 Sabre has a 90-degree liquid-cooled motor, but unlike the racer, the 80-horsepower street model only has four valves in each of its round cylinders. And as if the vee-four configuration alone were not enough, Honda has also developed new **downdraft** carbs and an industry-exclusive hydraulically actuated clutch.

But don't let the rubber-mounted engine distract you from the Pro-Link rear suspension or the 39mm **anti-dive** fork. And while you are gathering your lip up off the table, don't miss the new instrumentation that includes electronic speedometer and tachometer, with a liquid-crystal display to indicate water temperature, fuel level, tripmeter, digital clock/timer and a six-function monitoring system.

• If all this high technology does not dislocate your jaw, you'll probably still salivate uncontrollably at the sight of the custom-styled vee-four. The **V45 Magna** has all the stepped-seat looks a cruiser could want. Instruments are regular cable-driven items, and at the rear, Pro-Link suspension is replaced by twin VHD shocks.

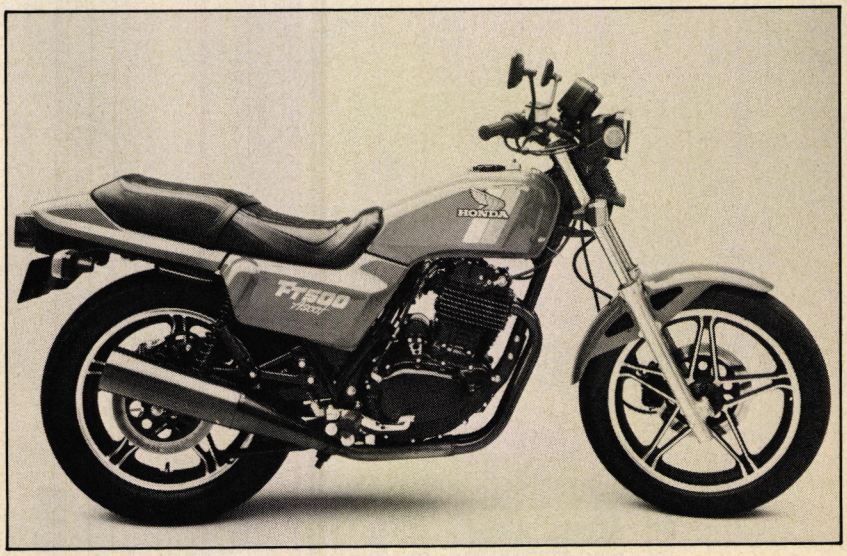
• For those whose juices flow at the sight of simpler things, Honda now has an **electric-starting** street version of the **XL500.** The four-valve trail motor has been given a shot of high performance for the Ascot model's street-racing duties. Disc brakes front and rear also make sure that the Ascot does more than *look* racy.

• But if you're into more sedate forms of transport, Honda has the **ultimate** factory-kitted touring rig to make everywhere seem just a little closer. The Gold Wing Aspencade is one giant step beyond the regular Interstate. In fact, the extra-plush Aspencade makes the Interstate look almost spartan. A larger, dished seat and an enlarged backrest help make the ride comfortable. And if you decide that different suspension settings could smooth things further, an onboard air **compressor** can be used to adjust both ends of the air-suspended bike. Ventilated disc brakes from last year's CBX will help you slow down in the twisties, and taller gearing will keep the motor purring more slowly on the freeway. For those long stretches of Superslab, Honda also has a vast array of **gadgets** to keep you company. A new stereo radio with optional 40-channel CB and cassette player can be heard through speakers or earphones and operated from a **remote control** at the left-side handgrip. The remote control also features digital read-outs for time, voltage, fuel level and temperature. You even get self-canceling turnsignals, relieving you of one more worry. And lady passengers will be happy to hear that they can



Honda slices into the high-performance market with a four-edged Sabre

Liquid cooling and Pro-Link for the world's first vee-four street bike.



Electric-starting FT500 Ascot has a two-into-one exhaust system

A singularly good idea for a lightweight canyon carver.

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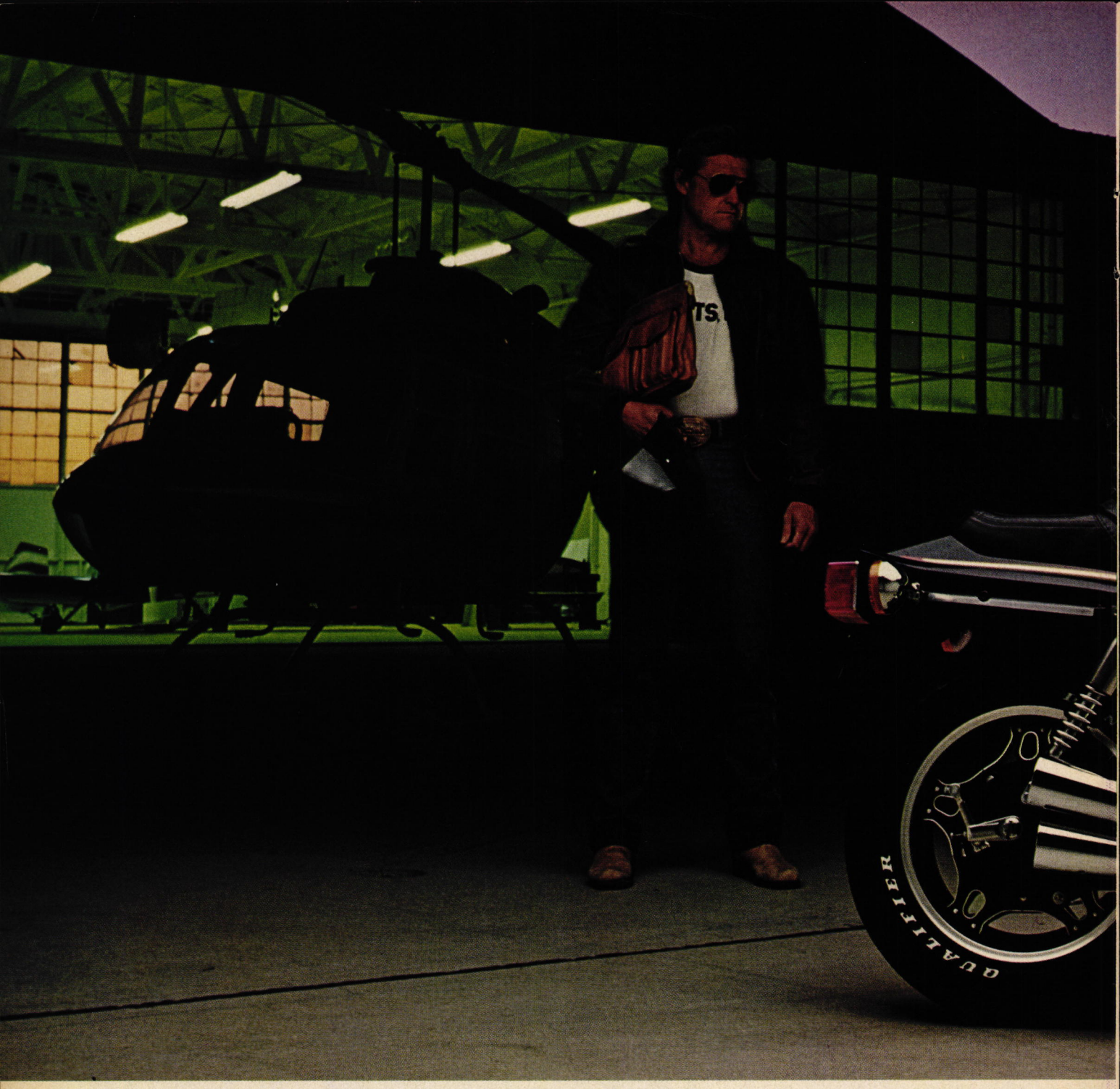

The Nighthawk™ has landed.

Riding a motorcycle, any motorcycle, separates you from the pack. But some motorcycles will take you just a little further away than the others.

Introducing the Nighthawk.™

A motorcycle that is not for just anyone.

Perhaps it's the look of the machine that sets it apart. The sculptured flow of the bodywork. The sleek profile. The fully adjustable new handlebars that move to fit you, not vice-versa.

Perhaps it's the rumble of the black, high-performance four-cylinder engine. The flash of the dual front disc brakes. Or the polished ComStar™ wheels and fat, low profile rear tire.

Whatever it is, the Nighthawk is clearly too unique, too distinctive, to be the right bike for everyman.

But then, we didn't build it to be.

HONDA

FOLLOW THE LEADER

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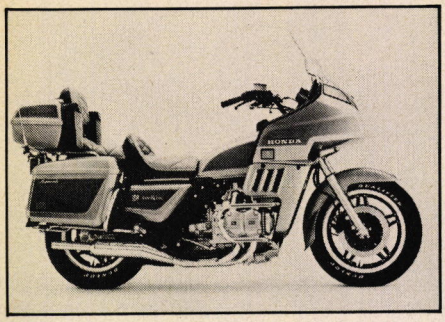
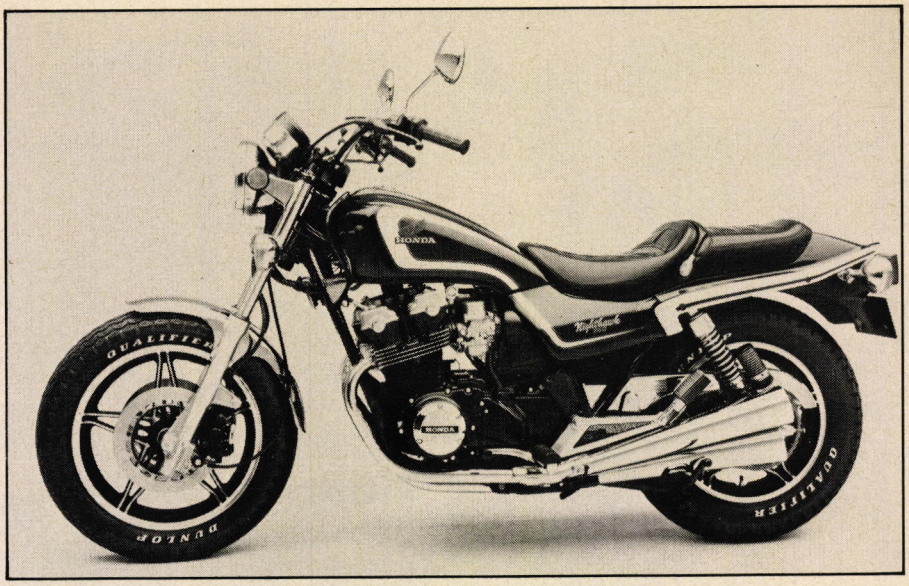


Honda's full-boat luxury liner

A first-class passage to Aspencade.

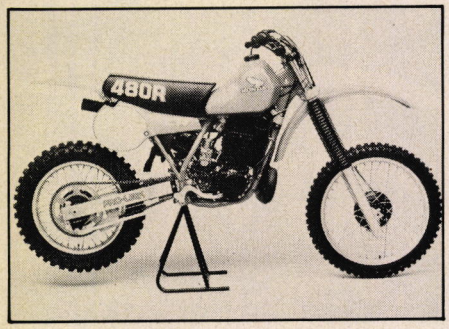
powder their noses with the help of a vanity mirror inside the rear trunk.

• You won't find any of these luxuries onboard the new **Nighthawk** line. Coming in 750cc, 650cc and 450cc sizes, these flashy bikes fall somewhere between the F models and customs, with mildly stepped seats, leading-axle forks, raised-white-letter tires and lots of dark paint.



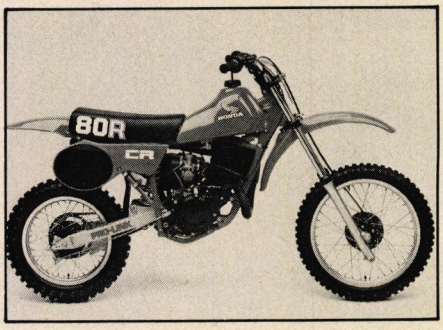
Swoopy lines highlight the 750 Nighthawk, a new look for the familiar four-piper

A Special kind of motorcycle that Honda thinks should come after Midnight.



The world champion comes in a crate

Honda's 480cc factory repli-racer.



CR80R gets an all-new chassis

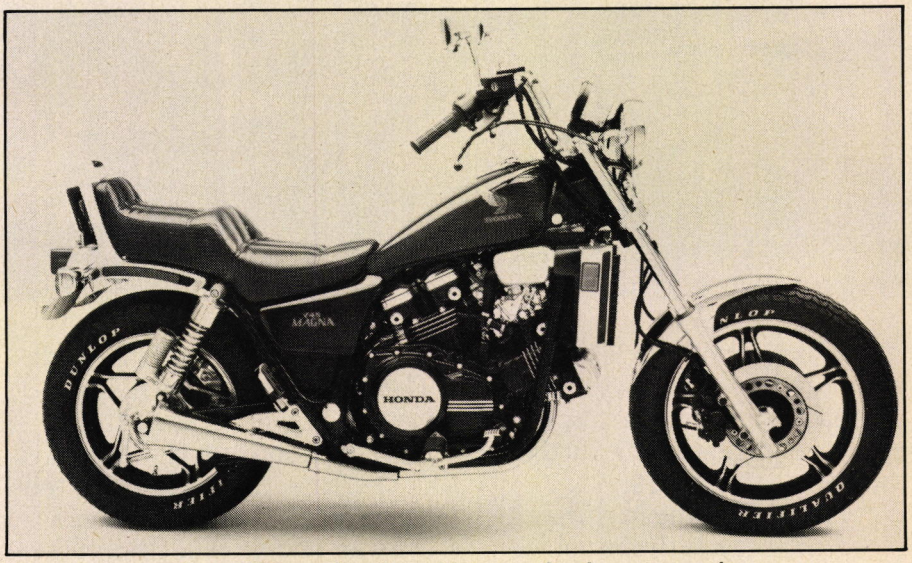
Pro-Link mini in the big league.

Adjustable damping on the CR125R fork

But an all-new motor will make it win.

Pro-Link-suspended XL500R

Thumping out a more serious note.



Street-cruiser version of 750 vee-four, but with conventional rear suspension

Honda calls it the Magna, but some will call it a high-tech Harley.

• And if you are wondering what motor powers the **450** Nighthawk, it's the pumped-up version of the 400cc twin that also powers the new Hawk model. Last year's Euro styling remains unchanged, but a larger bore is claimed to give the bike more midrange.

• The trusty CX500 also received a healthy power boost, but from a **turbocharger** rather than extra size. The CX500 Turbo is finally in full production, ready to rip open your jaw with sheer acceleration.

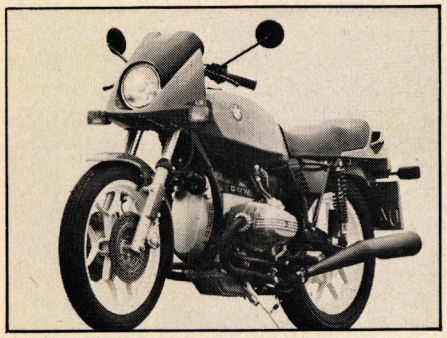
• If you're not into snarling street bikes, Honda might be able to coax you onto one of its new XL range. Both the 500cc and 250cc models now have the **Pro-Link** suspension found on the XR and CR dirt bikes. Larger forks, quick-detach wheels and an aluminum skid plates suggest a more serious role for these restyled trail bikes.

• And for those who are totally serious about their dirt riding, Honda has four new CRs that could make even a factory racer's mouth gape open. The mighty Open-classer now displaces **480cc** and shares few pieces with the old 450. Like both the 250 and the 125, the 480 has a new fork with adjustable compression damping and a new shock linked to a square-

section swingarm. The 250 waterpumper also has a new motor with **radiators** mounted lower for a lower center of gravity. And all three motocrossers have lighter hubs and rims.

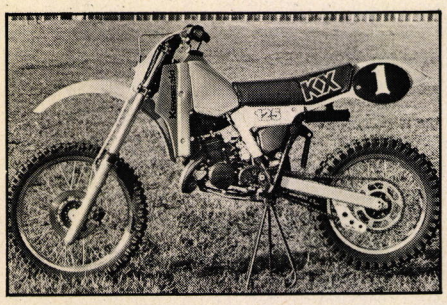
• Kids who are barely old enough to read this page will hardly believe the new CR80, with its Pro-Link suspension and longer front fork holding up a **revamped** six-speed motor.

• Not that Honda is the only company with something new. The boys in Berlin have just added a **Katana-esque** mini-fairing to the popular R65 BMW. You might also notice a



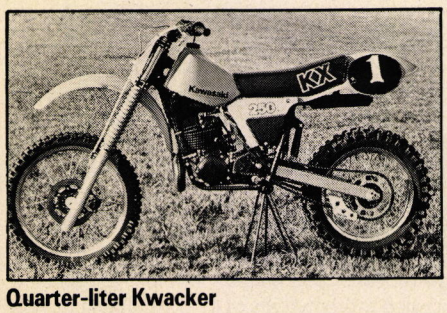
Stylish new BMW R65 café racer

Black paint and fairing from Munich.



Watercooled 125cc Kawasaki

A new racer pumped for victory.



Quarter-liter Kwacker

Suddenly, disco is back in.

new tail section with passenger grabrail and **black** exhausts. And if the thought of new wheels finally convinces you to buy one of those sporty BeeEms, you'll have to wait a month or two for delivery.

• You'll also have to wait to get your hands on Kawasaki's new dirt bikes. The redesigned 250 and watercooled 125 have made early sneak appearances and should be available soon. Both bikes share **hydraulic disc** front brakes and a new Uni-Trak suspension working a straight box-section swingarm.

—David Dewhurst

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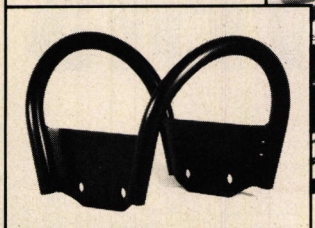

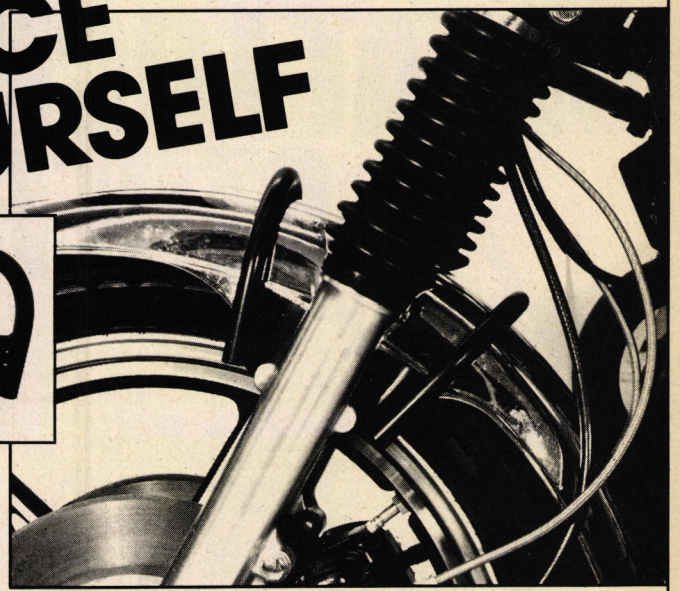

fork braces for superior handling

$79 in electrostatic black, $109 in chrome

After years of development and testing on the street and race track THE ULTIMATE SOURCE Front Fork Braces are available for most Honda, Kawasaki, Yamaha and Suzuki motorcycles. Designed to keep your fork sliders in perfect alignment with each other and eliminate front end flex. Easily installed without special tools. Thick-wall chrome-moly tubing. California residents add 6% sales tax. Master Card and Visa welcome. Add $3 for UPS Shipping. Send your order or phone:

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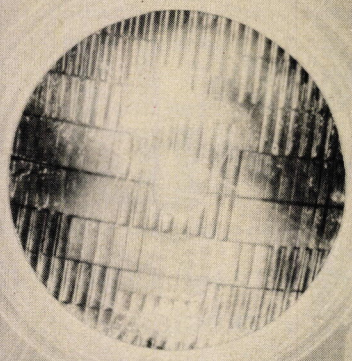
SWITCH ON SAFETY THAT SAVES

"The benefits of headlight modulators are indisputable."



During daytime riding, a headlight pulsating about four times per second improves your chances of being seen by other drivers. Headlight modulators extend lamp life up to **three times**. This provides a savings of **$20 to $40 per lamp**, depending on the type of headlight you use. The modulated headlight uses **less current**. this means there's more power available for other accessories.

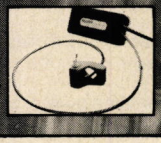
You get all this with the **Martek Flasher.**

What you don't get is an inconvenient bypass switch on an ugly box that's nearly impossible to mount.

Instead **Martek** gives you an **attractive handlebar mount switch** for convenient transition from daytime pulsating to constant nighttime beam. And the solid state electronincs can be easily hidden behind a sidecover, inside a fairing or wherever.

The **Flasher** works equally well with sealed beam or quartz halogen headlights and fits all **12 volt negative ground systems.** And the **Flasher** can be connected so the brake light pulsates too.

The **Flasher** comes with easy to follow installation instructions and a full **one year, no hassle guarantee.** For more information contact your local **Martek** dealer. Suggested retail price is $49.95.



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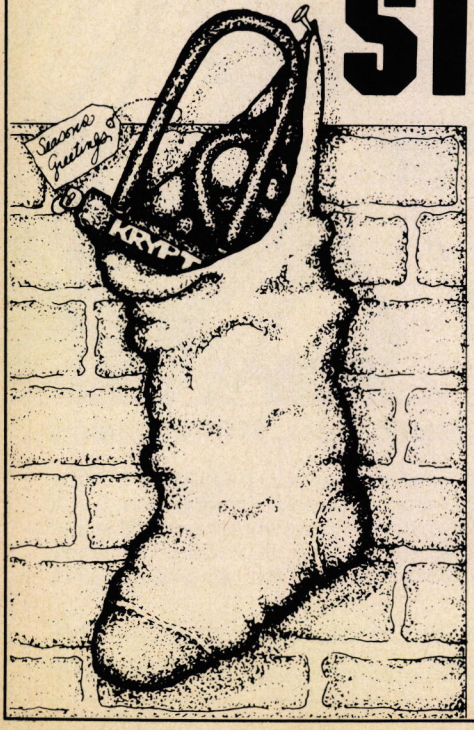

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FEDERAL CASES

• Louisiana, one of the first states to abolish the Federally-encouraged mandatory **helmet law** in 1976, became the first to reinstate one. HB 15 has been signed into law by the state's governor.

• In the meantime, across the water in Great Britain, 72-year-old Fred Hill continues his battle against that country's helmet law. Hill was brought before a magistrate in Uxbridge, Middlesex, and sentenced to 30 days in Pentonville **Prison.** Over 250 helmet-law fines have not been paid by the veteran warrior.

• Meanwhile, back on this side of The Pond, California's Department of Parks and Recreation is studying possibility of acquiring 1900 acres of land for use as an **off-road vehicle park** in San Diego County.

• Back on the street, **Federal** vehicle safety **standards** save lives, according to a study by Leon S. Robertson of Yale University. Robertson estimates that 26,500 auto passengers avoided becoming part of fatality statistics because of Federal auto standards during the 1975–78 period. Fed standards for cars were also credited with saving the lives of 7600 pedestrians, 1000 bicyclists and 2000 motorcyclists.

• More direct rider-safety measures have been suggested in England by an investigator for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. **Fluorescent**-striped clothing, daytime headlight use, larger-looking front ends for motorcycles and "a more **threatening** presence" were recommended.

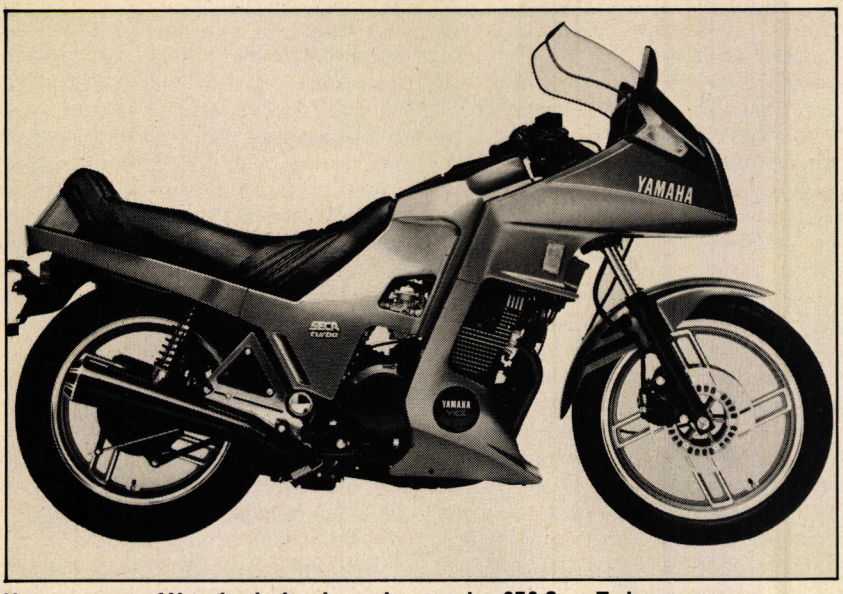
• Riders of all appearances will probably applaud the news that the NHTSA, which gave us Joan Claybrook, the double nickel and 85-mph speedos under Jimmy Carter, is being targeted for drastic **budget cuts** by the Reagan administration.

• But NHTSA cutbacks have negative implications, too. A number of state **rider-education** programs that have relied on the agency for funding will be hurt. Still, only about two percent of available funds was spent on motorcycle-related programs in 1980, which hovered near a miniscule .5 percent in earlier years, so maybe the loss won't hurt motorcyclists too much.

• Even loss of Federal funding isn't necessarily all bad: Rider **solidarity** can result. A group of motorcyclists banded together to form the United Motorcyclists of Illinois in that state and helped guide SB-731 through the legislature and to the governor's desk, where it awaits his signature. The bill calls for continuation of Illinois' rider-education program. Funds formerly provided by the NHTSA would be replaced by money collected from increased motorcycle **registration fees.** *—Tash Matsuoka*

HARD CASH

• It might be a long, hard struggle to the top, but newly-crowned World Champion Marco Luchinelli already realizes it was worth the effort. After years of begging for financial help,



Heart-stopper of Yamaha dealer show, the stunning 650 Seca Turbo.

Watch this space next month for more details on this and all 1983 Yamahas.

Lucky Luchinelli has already turned down a **$600,000** deal to ride for fellow countryman and former world champion Giacomo Agostini. But don't worry, Lucky has not gone crazy with victory, he is getting rid of the small bidders before considering Honda's two-year contract offer of $1.5 million.

• If you're concerned about where **Honda** is going to get all the contract money, don't worry. It hasn't been a red-hot sales year for bikes, but Honda's worldwide profits more than doubled last year, reportedly exceeding **$400 million**. So, if you have any money left over from the bike purchase that helped create those profits, you might want to invest in a few of Honda's shares. Ask your broker to look for Honda's new listing on the London Stock Exchange.

• While you're scanning the pages of the *Wall Street Journal* for the closing prices, you might notice that auto giant **General Motors** has just cut a $35-million check made payable to Suzuki Motor Company. But before you go looking for a Suzuki sales fleet of rebated cars and trucks, we had better explain that GM has bought a five-percent share in the **Japanese**

Continued

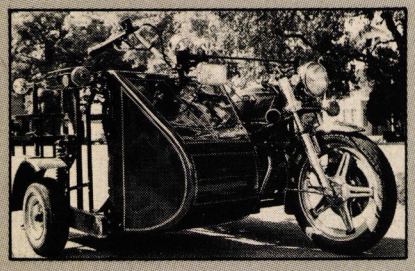
RIDE/REPORT:
Tomco Motorcycle Wheelchair

On the road again.

• At first glance, it seems to be nothing more unusual than another sidecar rig tooling down the road. But that inevitable *second* glance reveals a cycle without a rider in the saddle and a sidecar with a handlebar.

It's something that deserves another, and closer, look: a motorcycle and sidecar combination designed by Tomco Enterprises Inc. (7701 Hoover Rd., Valley Center, Kansas 67147) specifically for riders confined to wheelchairs.

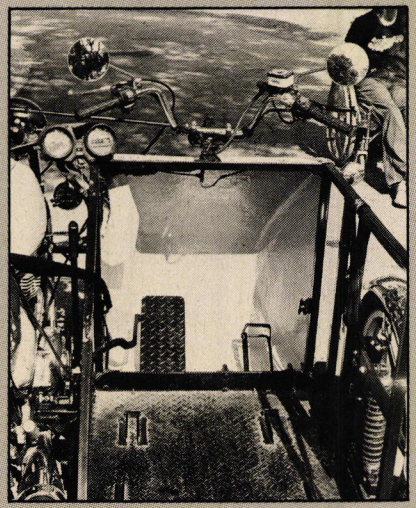
Tomco's Tom Terning got his inspiration for the project while watching an old friend grapple with the seemingly simple task of going to the corner store. "I watched him



transfer back and forth, from the chair to the van, out of the van and back into the chair, and said, 'There's got to be a better way.' "

Terning considered adapting cars and vans, but the expense and complexity were prohibitive. A motorcycle, though, seemed like an elegant solution to the problem, offering lower initial cost, greater fuel-efficiency, savings in time and energy, independence of movement, and—as a bonus—the joy of real wind-in-the-face motorcycling.

The result of that motorcycle adaptation has a steel frame and platform, with a fiberglass fairing forming a kind of nose cone. The handlebar is mounted in a modified triple clamp assembly bolted to the frame just behind the fairing. An automotive tie rod transfers motion from the handlebar to the front fork. The third wheel has its own brake, and mounts on a spindle rated at 1500 pounds carrying capacity. Dual shocks complete the suspension set-



up. Two seat belts secure the rider's wheelchair to prevent undesired movement.

Tomco can produce a complete unit in approximately three weeks, using one of two Honda models with automatic transmissions: the CB400A or the CB750A. Customers can ship their own motorcycles to Tomco for conversion, or can specify the complete vehicle. The sidecar alone is $2050; a ready-to-roll CB400A-powered unit is $3650. Controls are tailored to each customer's requirements at no extra cost.

Mickey Chapman recently replaced his two-year-old Hawk with a 750A. "I've had it for two months. I love it. It's much faster," he says.

Still, the 400cc version seems more than adequate for most purposes. Chapman and his friend Jim Parker have made trips of more than 700 miles with their 400s without any trouble. And for urban jaunts, the pair have virtually forsaken their four-wheelers.

"It's a free feeling," Parker says of riding the Tomco conversion. "You're not confined inside something. You can taste things, smell things." "I told myself originally that I rode because of the gas economy," Chapman says, laughing. "But really, I ride because it's fun."

So the Tomco conversion is more than a motorcycle, and more than a high-speed prosthesis. It eliminates many mobility problems and retains qualities of the motorcycling experience that have special value for the physically disadvantaged. And like the flashiest superbikes, it has the ability to turn heads.

But like few other vehicles of any kind, it has the ability to change lives, too.

—Charles Everitt

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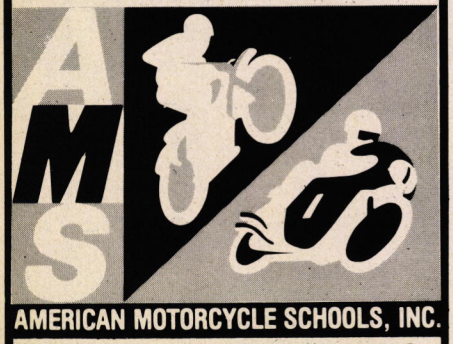

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company. And don't worry about air conditioning and 5-mph bumpers on your GS1100. GM claims it's only interested in Suzuki's minicars, trucks and vans.

• **Kreidler**, the West German moped and motorcycle company, could use some General Motors money right now. It is reported to be negotiating wage concessions with the labor force in an effort to salvage the company. Kreidler's racing department is owned by the Dutch Van Veen company and is financially secure.

• Can-Am, the two-wheeled subsidiary of Bombardier, is looking pretty healthy too, after signing its fourth contract with the **Belgian Armed forces**. This latest $4 million sale of military bikes and spares brings Belgium's total bill from Can-Am to $15 million over a four-year period. War might be hell, but it's sure good for the economy.

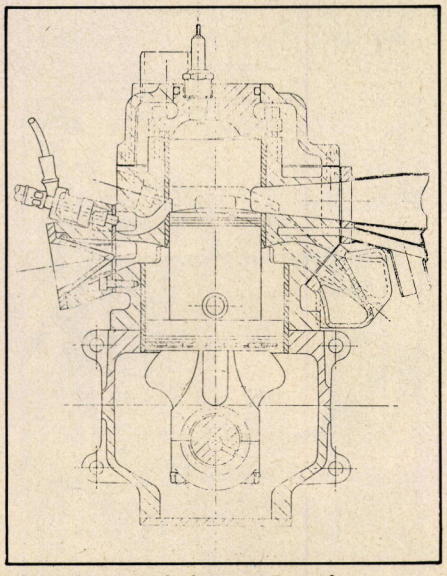
• The American accessory industry obviously does not need a war to help its business. U.S. Department of Trade figures show that exports of **aftermarket** items such as exhausts, shock absorbers, fairings, chrome bolt-ons and high-performance kits rose by a staggering $6.5 million—up to $25.8 million in 1980. Japan accounted for $2.3 million of that total, but were a distant second behind Canada, which swapped their dollars for ours to the tune of $5.3 million.

• The Muscular Dystrophy Association is another charity that recently benefited from motorcyclists' generosity. During his Labor Day Telethon on national television, Jerry Lewis received a $250,000 check from **Harley-Davidson** president Charles K. Thompson on behalf of the "Biker's Fight Against Muscular Dystrophy."

—David Dewhurst

RUMORS

• Honda might have laid its new-model cards on the table, but it seems to have left an ace up its corporate sleeve. The loose tongues of the industry predict—and remember, they were correct about the vee-four street bike—that Honda will soon unveil a two-stroke replacement for the ill-fated NR500. And those in the know think that Fast Freddie has already straddled the bike, which, if you can believe it, is a **vee-three** with electronic fuel injection and perhaps even a stepped piston. Sounds almost as unlikely as oval pistons, but however successful the new two-stroke is, insiders say that Honda will continue to challenge Suzuki and Yamaha with its four-stroke, too.



Injected, stepped-piston two-stroke

Could it be a Honda racer for the 80s?

• Yamaha isn't taking Honda's challenge lying down, though. While Big Red fights back on the racetrack, Yamaha is ready to centerpunch Honda on the street. This clash could catch Honda where it hurts most, if rumors of a 550cc **water-cooled** vee-twin Yamaha are true. And if you believe that four valves per cylinder and Monoshock suspension come with the package, you can understand Honda's being a little nervous.

• There will be even more Honda board meetings if anyone there hears stories of a **race-serious** four-stroke dirt bike. The latest gossip suggests that Yamaha is after Honda on the dirt front with a revamped TT500 that now displaces 560cc beneath a four-valve head. There is even talk of the five-speed Monoshocker weighing exactly the same as an XR500R.

• If you believe all that Yamaha gossip, you will probably accept tales of a **490cc** motocrosser and a watercooled 250—and you'd probably believe that all three racers have power valves.

• But perhaps you're not really interested. Maybe you're a street guy who won't believe anything until he sees it. In that case, you won't even be interested in hearing tales of a turbocharged 650 Yamaha or a watercooled 550 that Suzuki spies claim is waiting on the back burner until a **turbo** system is perfected.

• Our man in Japan has also found a small hole in the wall at Kawasaki, and he swears he saw a new GPz550 with **Uni-Trak** suspension. The hole was too small to see much detail, but the rear end apparently looked like something off of Kawasaki's world-championship-winning roadracers, while the rest of the bike looked little different.

• Not all the gossip is coming from Japan, though. There's a lot of bull from Spain right now that new Pursangs will be seen with **single-shock** suspensions.

• And if you go into the Bavarian woods today, there are tales of loud **roaring** noises. Nobody has found the source, but the locals think it could be a Porsche Design vee-four Harley motor. Some folk even think there are two motors, one as big as 1000cc and one a baby of 800cc. There's even talk that we could hear those forest rumblings on these shores in 1983.

• But you can't always believe the rumblings of the forest. So you'd best tread carefully with loose talk of a **three-wheeled** Husky. If nothing was lost in the translation, the Swedish words we heard told of automatic 250cc motors bolted into an ATC-type chassis.

—David Dewhurst

Continued

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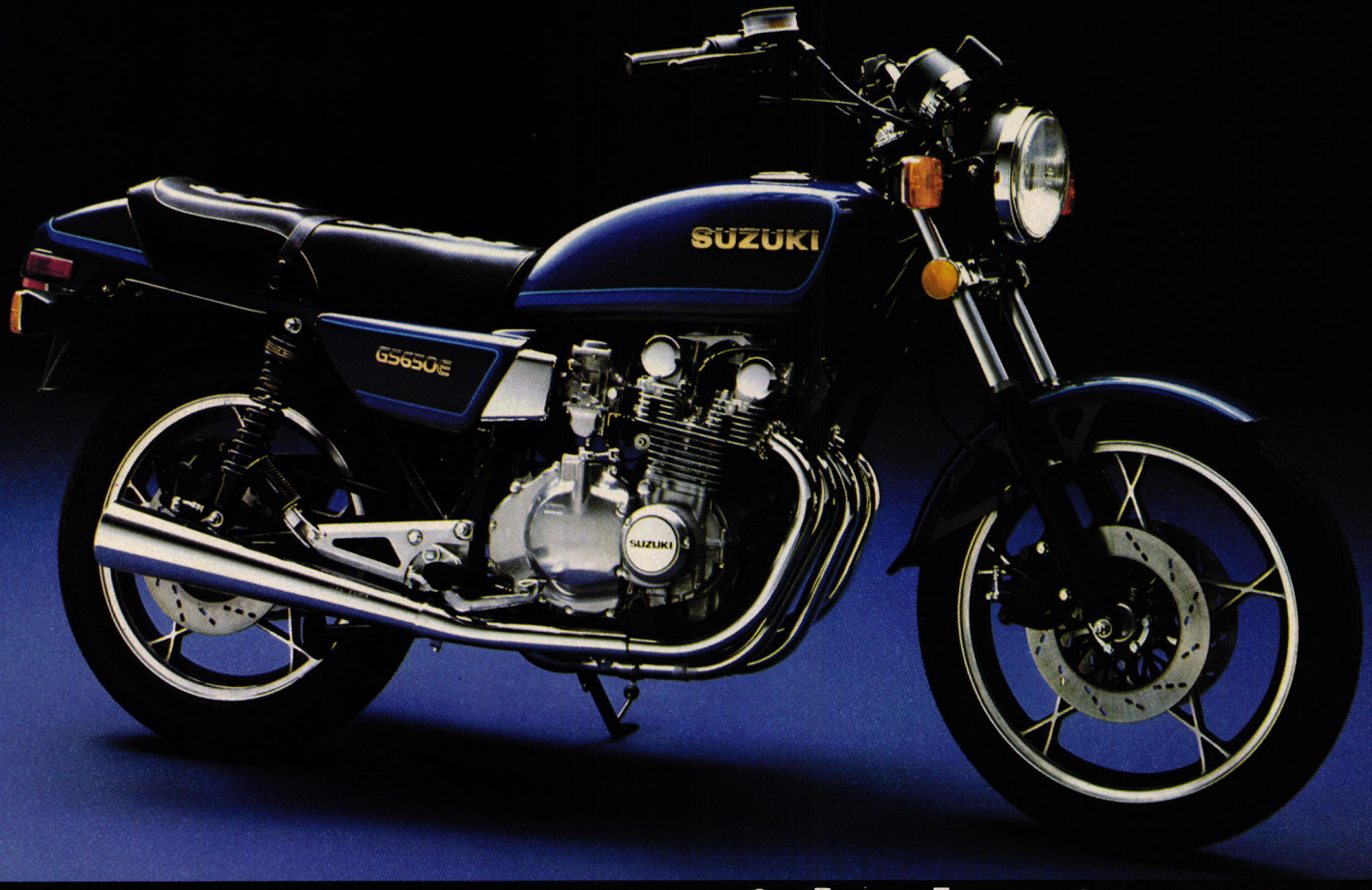

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Front air forks, fully adjustable shocks and new instrumentation with fuel gauge are a few new features of the GS-650E.

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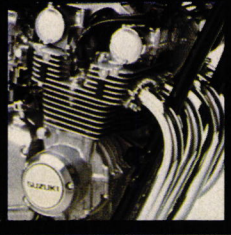
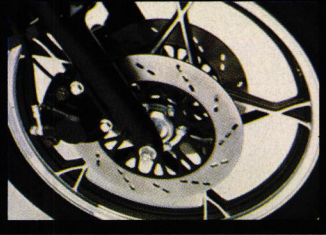


Refined front end: Front air forks and dual slotted front disc brakes are now standard.



Smooth-riding suspension: Features multi-adjustable damping rear shocks.

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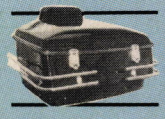

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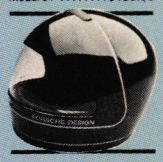

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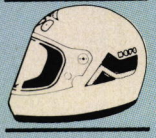

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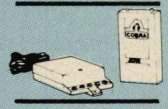

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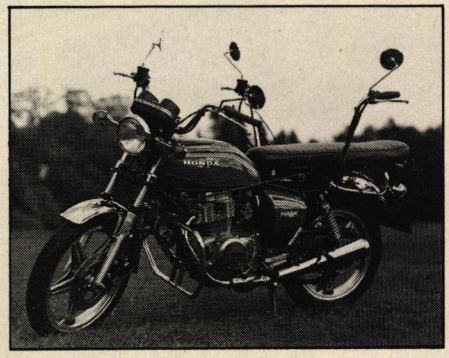
APART FROM THE CROWD

• Participants at the 1982 California State **Firemen's** Olympics will get a chance to fan the flames of enthusiasm with a new sport: moto-cross. Hot-blooded racers from fifteen fire departents made inquiries within a week of the event's announcement. And there's a good chance that fire-fighters interested in burning up the pavement will get road racing included in 1983's program.

• If Bill Herndon were a fireman, he'd probably want to add endurance riding to the contest. The 6-foot 164-pound Californian set a record for 50cc motorcycles by riding a **Honda MB5** 1500 miles in 8 days from Mexico to Canada. Guinness World Book of Records officials have been asked to verify the results. In the meantime, Herndon has already won Cycle Guide's Moto-Masochist-of-the-Month Award.

• Before you can establish any kind of **record,** you have to learn how to ride. And **Dual Controls** Systems, Inc., has devised a novel approach to rider education: a motorcycle



Dual Control's setup on Honda 400 Hawk

Back-seat driving put to good use.

with two sets of controls. An instructor riding behind the student can override the forward throttle, brake and clutch controls. DCS also claims that the instructor can take over the bike's steering because the rear handlebar has greater **leverage** than the one in front. But we have to wonder what happens if a very large student decides to go left when the instructor wants to go right. Look for a fearless Ride/Report in a future edition of Guide Lines.

• A totally different matter concerns a rider, a motorcycle, a dog and a funeral. When Ohio biker Fred Geobert recently lost an argument with a **dump truck**, his friends and family decided to bury him with the 1946 Harley-Davidson he loved. And if a biker without his bike isn't ready for the next world, neither is a man without his dog, right? So plans were made to include Geobert's pit bull, Katie Sue, in the burial. But cooler heads managed to get that part of the ceremony cancelled. What kept **Katie Sue** separated from her master was the fact that "she ain't dead yet." Good reasoning. Lucky Katie Sue.

—Tash Matsuoka •

ROAD TEST:

Suzuki GS1000S Katana

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 RICH COX

A futuristic flashbike that could change Suzuki's image in two ways: one it bargained for and one it didn't.

BY PAUL DEAN

"Before you can get them to listen," said the farmer as he dealt his donkey a crushing blow over the head with a two-by-four, "you've first gotta get their attention."

That tidbit of nonsense is, in case you didn't already know, the punchline to an old and not particularly funny joke. But buried somewhere in its inelegance is a nugget of pure insight. For to understand that farmer's simplistic attention-getting technique is also to understand what prompted Suzuki to build the most unusual-looking motorcycle in its history—the GS1000S Katana. You see, from the standpoint of having visual impact, the Katana effectively *is* a two-by-four; and because Suzuki's top brass feel that you haven't been listening to their subtle-but-sensible moto-message in recent years, they've taken another tack—to clobber you, so to speak, with the Katana's bizarre appearance, hoping that the jolt will make you pay closer attention.

Indeed. But closer attention to what? Well, to hear Suzuki tell it, you people out there haven't been responding to the company's steadfast dedication to superior all-around performance and sensible engineering. You've been reacting instead to the ultra-conservative styling of Suzuki

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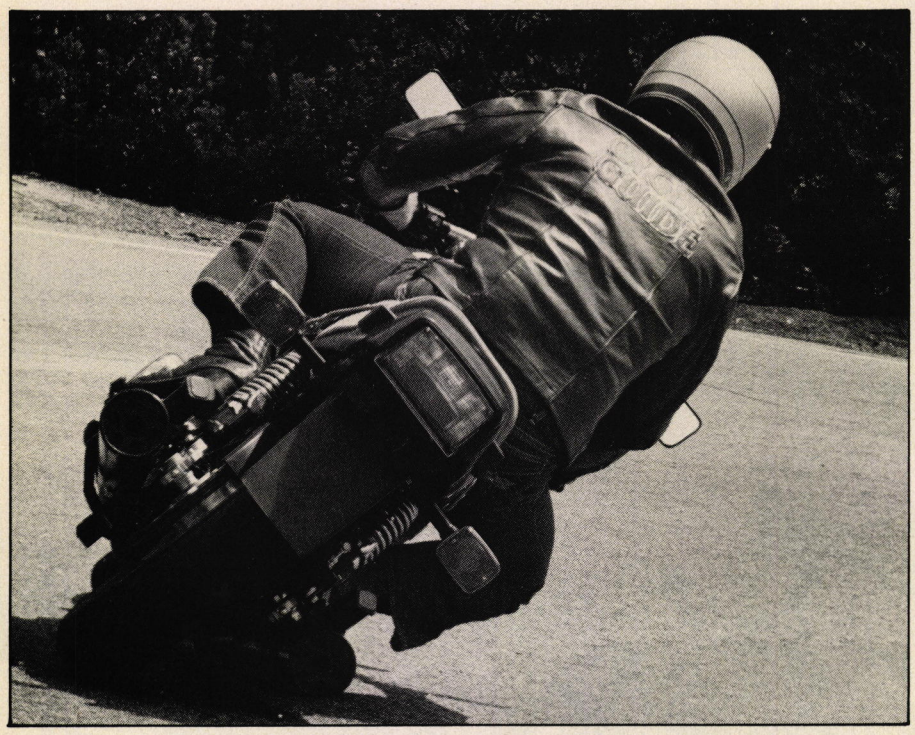


motorcycles by staying away from them in droves. And that's despite the fact that many of them are the fastest, best-handling and most-exhilarating machines in their class to ride—not to mention being competitively priced and exceptionally reliable as well. But the consensus out on the streets is that visually, a Suzuki is about as exciting as watching grass grow. And since looks are just as instrumental in selling motorcycles as is performance, Suzukis might have been winning the stoplight-to-stoplight battles, but they've been losing the day-to-day sales war.

Given Suzuki's need to punch up its fuddy-duddy image, then, the idea of building a wacko-bike makes sense. Which is why Suzuki contracted Helmut Muth, West German designer and ex-chief of styling for BMW, to conjure an all-time eye-grabber. The mandate given Muth was clear and simple: come up with something so different, so outrageous, that people will *have* to stare at it, in amazement if for no other reason. And if it does that, then maybe, just maybe, everyone will stop thinking of Suzukis as the best remedy for sleepless nights since Sominex.

That Muth succeeded in creating something truly different is indisputable; what remains to be seen is whether that difference will prove beneficial or detrimental to Suzuki's image. One thing is for sure, though: People *do* notice the shark-nosed, futuristic Katana, even those who normally show no interest in motorcycles. And without exception, they either love it intensely or hate it with a passion; there's no middle ground. In fact, the only grey areas around this motorcycle are the painted ones on its body and frame.

Actually, if you were to strip the Katana of its other-worldly bodywork, you'd find a more-or-less standard-issue Suzuki living under there. The 16-valve engine is essentially just a GS1100 powerplant with a 2mm-smaller bore and a 1.2mm-shorter stroke; and the basic frame, swingarm and wheels were lifted from a GS1100, too. Despite a long list of similarities, however, the Katana does have strong café/puresport overtones that are apparent in its clip-on bars and rearset foot controls; and those, combined with a couple of chassis differences, have resulted in a motorcycle that focuses in on a much narrower segment of the market than the go-anywhere, do-anything GS1100.

It's interesting to note that elsewhere in the world the Katana is an 1100, but that to qualify for AMA Superbike racing (which has a 1000cc upper limit), it appears in this country only in 998cc form. But Suzuki anticipates that people will expect GS11-level performance from this limited-production street racer; so the motor was given a few extra tuning tweaks to allow it to run on par with a GS1100. The intake cam timing was advanced five degrees, the Twin Swirl Combustion Chambers (TSCC) were reshaped ever so slightly for better high-rpm fuel atomization, and the airbox was rethought to allow better breathing and to incorporate internal velocity stacks.

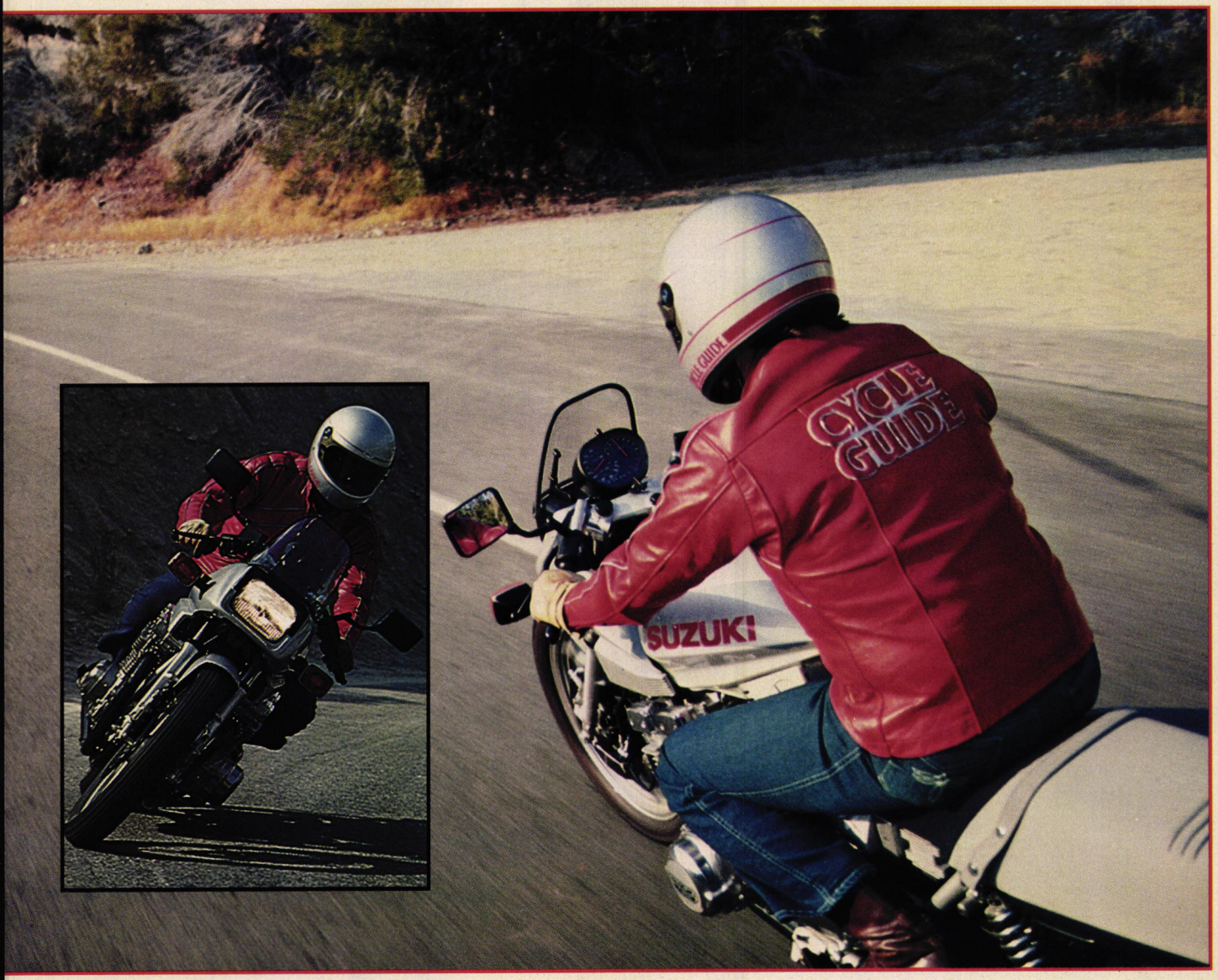
Further enhancing the Katana's acceleration potential is a smaller-diameter (118mm vs. 130mm) alternator rotor that fractionally reduces the crankshaft's overall flywheel inertia. The roller-bearing crank itself is just like the 1100's, save for the small stroke decrease. But the Katana motor uses beefier connecting rods and a stronger alloy in the cast pistons, plus a slightly different valve-seat material that can withstand greater heat—all in anticipation of the extra-hard, higher-rpm sport riding (or possibly even flat-out racetrack use) the Katana may encounter.

The rest of the motor apparently was deemed up to the challenge, since everything else—clutch, gears, ratios, bearings, electronic ignition, etc.—is identical to its GS1100 counterpart.

We have no reason to doubt Suzuki's wisdom in these matters of durability, especially since our test bike suffered not even the tiniest failure. But we do refute the claim that the Katana will run neck-and-neck with a GS1100. It won't—not unless you measure engine performance solely in terms of WFO operation, and unless you're talking only about 1980 and '81 GS1100s. Okay, so the Katana's quarter-mile times (mid elevens) and top speed (just over 140) both indicate that it generates about as much peak horsepower as the bigger GeeEss; but there's considerable difference in the way they work during more common use, like chuffing around town at lower revs and accelerating during roll-ons. And the 1000cc version of this engine—especially since it's in a more high-strung state of tune—just doesn't deliver the kind of locomotive-class torque that has made the GS1100 a tire-smoking, wheelstanding legend in its own time.

On the other hand, the Katana is anything but a slouch compared to the other performance bikes in its general displacement range—the GPz1100, the KZ1000J, the CB900F and even the 1981 eight-valve GS1000S. It's about as fast as the bigger-motored GPz and clearly is able to leave all the one-liter stuff languishing in its dust. The Katana is also torquier than anything that's likely to challenge you out on the road except for a Yamaha XS Eleven, the aforementioned GS1100 and maybe an occasional Peterbilt. And even though the 1000 won't outlug its 1100cc stablemate, it nonetheless executes roll-ons from any rpm in the same willing and powerful manner, the difference being that it nets you only about 90 percent as much acceleration. If you stir the S-model's smooth-operating shifter, though, and wind the tach needle up toward the nine-grand redline, the 1000 still won't outrun the 1100, but the rider on the bigger GS will think twice before challenging another Katana.

Overall, Suzuki can be right proud of the Katana's motor in every aspect of its performance but one: vibration. But that's a serious problem area; for between about 3700 and 4200 rpm, things get, if you'll pardon the pun, downright shaky. The grips and pegs buzz badly enough to numb the rider's hands and feet if he lingers in that unfriendly rev range for long, and the vibration induces loud resonant buzzing noises in the fiberglass fairing. Everywhere else the engine is pleasantly smooth, but normal highway cruising can be markedly *un*pleasant, since the offensive vibrations occur between 58 and 66 mph in top gear. The engineers obviously were aware of the problem, since the handlebar extensions



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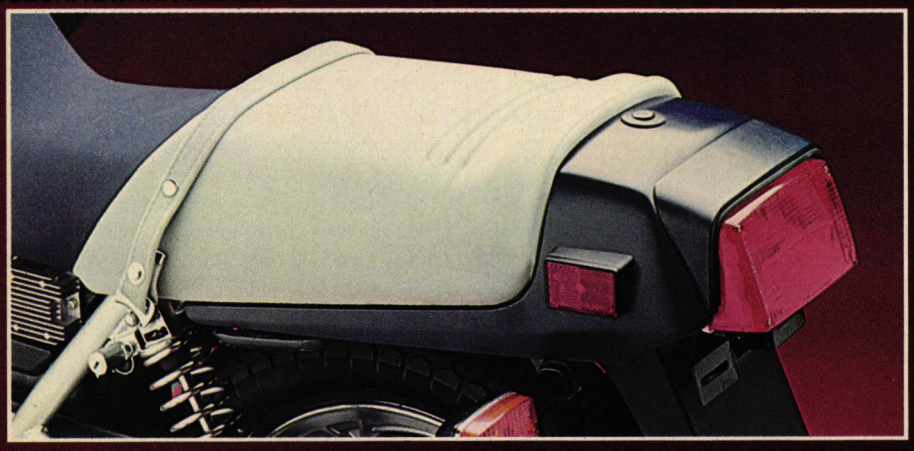
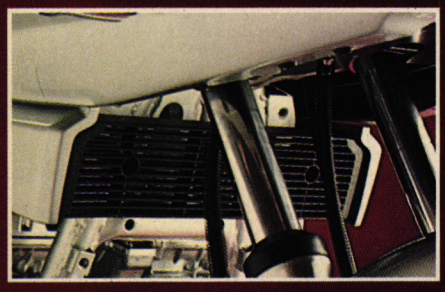
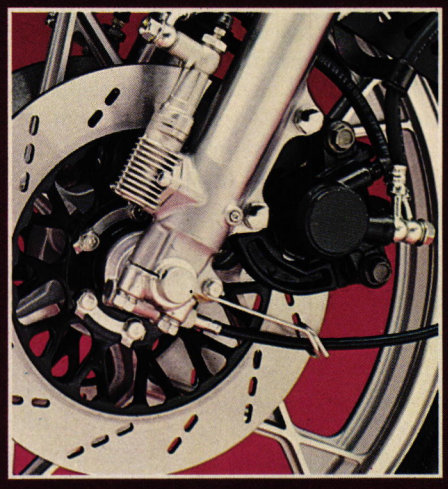
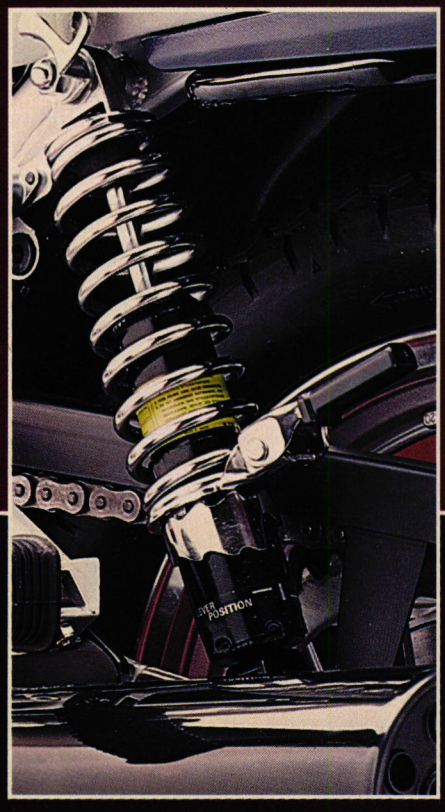
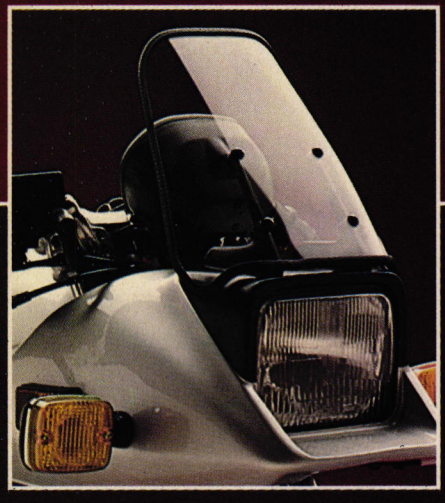
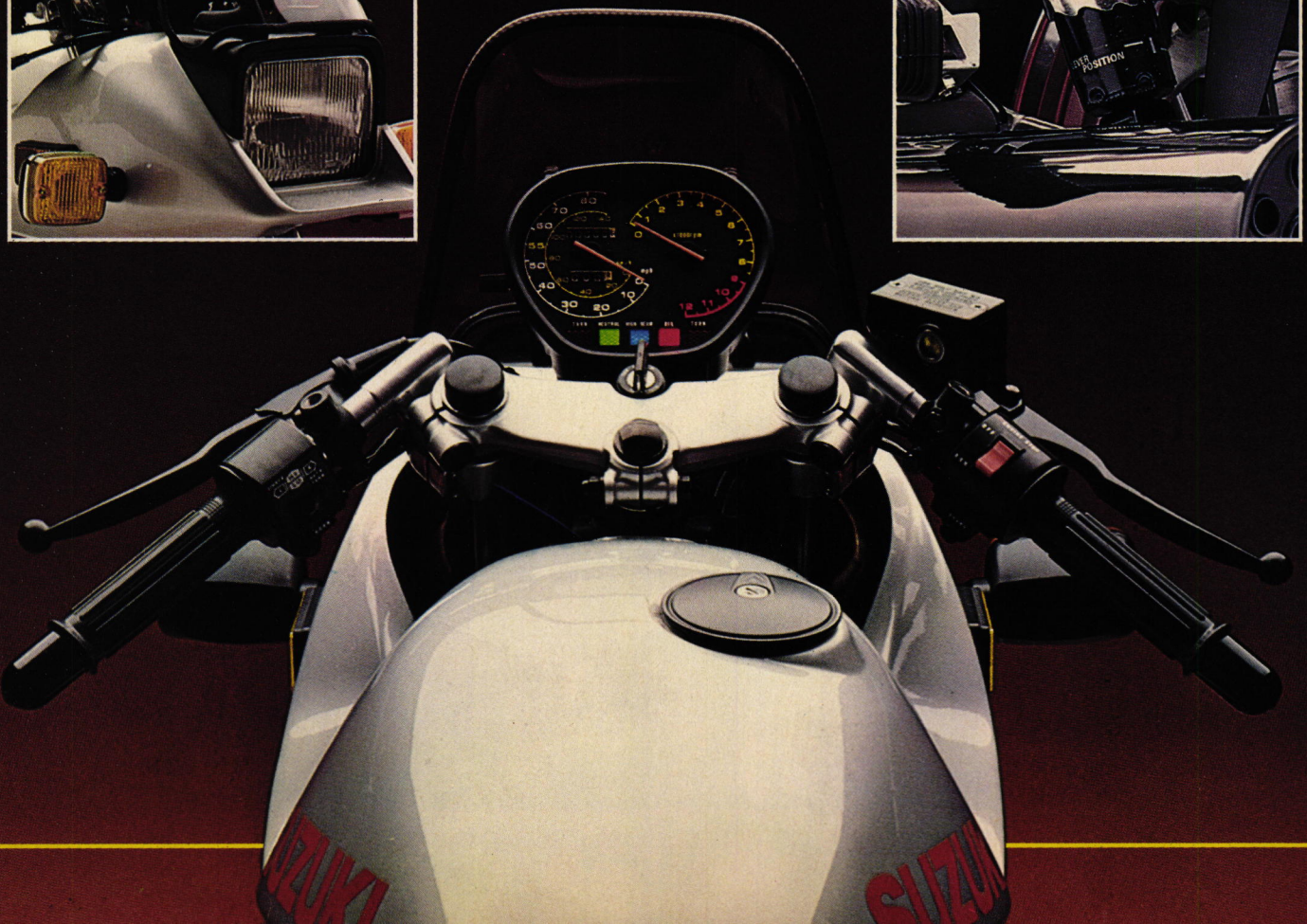


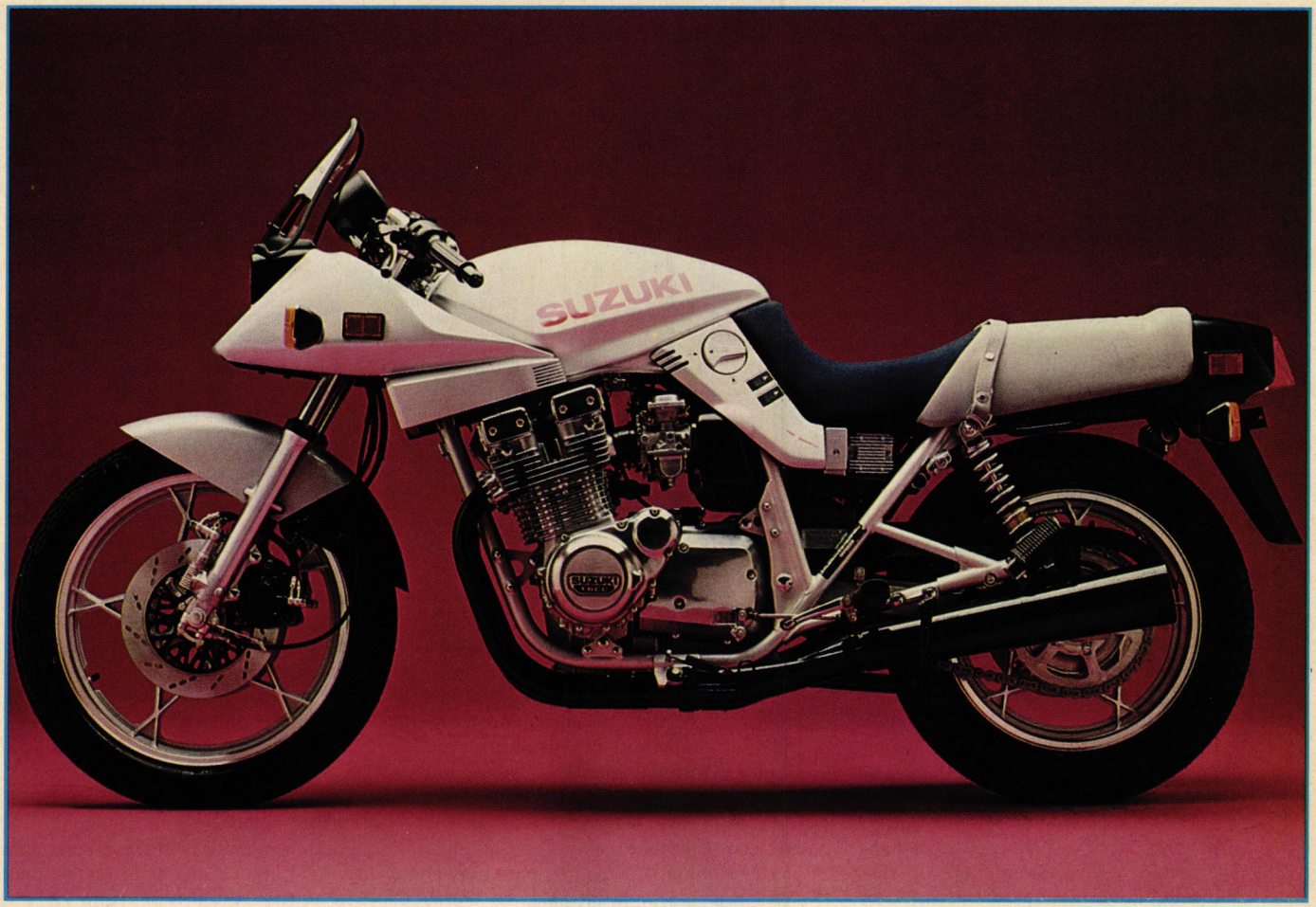












on the outside ends of the alloy clip-ons are heavy solid steel. They were put there, presumably, to dampen some—but not, unfortunately, enough—of the vibration that attacks the rider's hands.

That handlebar-weighting trick has been used by other manufacturers, but it's inconsistent with one of Suzuki's fundamental engineering philosophies: Cure the ailment, don't just treat the symptoms. The Katana, though, employs more than one such engineering Band-Aid, the most egregious being the incredibly stiff suspension it somehow acquired during the transformation from multi-purpose GS1100 to GS1000S street racer. Evidently those harsh wheel rates were deemed necessary because of the original chassis' limited cornering clearance—a condition caused by low engine placement and aggravated by a soft, easily compressed suspension. And since either designing a narrower engine or raising the existing one undoubtedly would have proven cost-ineffective, the only alternative (and the least expensive one) was to stiffen the wheel rates so that the suspension undergoes only minimum compression during hard cornering.

Fair enough. Except that it also compresses minimally the rest of the time as well. Which is an indirect way of saying that the Katana rides badly—worse, in fact, than any Japanese-built motorcycle in a long time. The rider can feel every bump, every ripple, every undulation of any kind on the road surface. He feels them twice, actually—once through the clip-ons and again through the seat. And if the imperfections happen to be evenly spaced, such as the expansion joints on concrete-slab highways, the resultant rocking-horse ride is pure agony if it has to be endured for more than a few minutes.

Worse yet, if you combine that ride with a thinly padded seat, a full-tuck roadrace-style riding position that puts a lot of torso weight on your hands and bends your legs at radical angles, and then top the whole business off with some midrange vibration, you end up with a motorcycle that's utterly awful for even medium-long jaunts on straight roads.

Now, we're aware that the Katana is configured for pure sport riding, not for cruising the Interstates. And we admit that when you're playing a hot peg-dragging tune on a curvy rural route, the bike *is* more comfortable. But man cannot travel by twisty road alone here in America, and that's why no self-respecting 1000cc wonderbike should deliver you home after just a few hours on the open road feeling as though you've just been in a barroom brawl. And lost. But the Katana does.

Not that the S-model doesn't handle well, for its ability to straighten corners ranks right up there with the best. But it does so *despite* its suspension, not because of it. After all, the GS1100 is a top-notch handler in its own right that's merely in need of better ground clearance. Yet the 1100 is more compliant when its suspension is set at its firmest than the Katana is at its softest.

What's more, the only adjustment on the Katana's inline-axle front fork is for spring preload; the damping adjusters and air-assist feature used on the 1100's leading-axle fork have been omitted. The rebound-damping adjusters on the shocks still are there, though, complemented by innovative folding handles that operate clever new ratchet-type preload adjusters.

Experimentation showed us that the best ride was obtained with everything set, obviously, on full-soft. And the best overall handling came when all adjustments were put on either their second- or third-softest settings. The Katana then sliced around corners with all of the crispness implied by

Continued

Katana Style: Monday Morning Quarterbacking At Its Finest

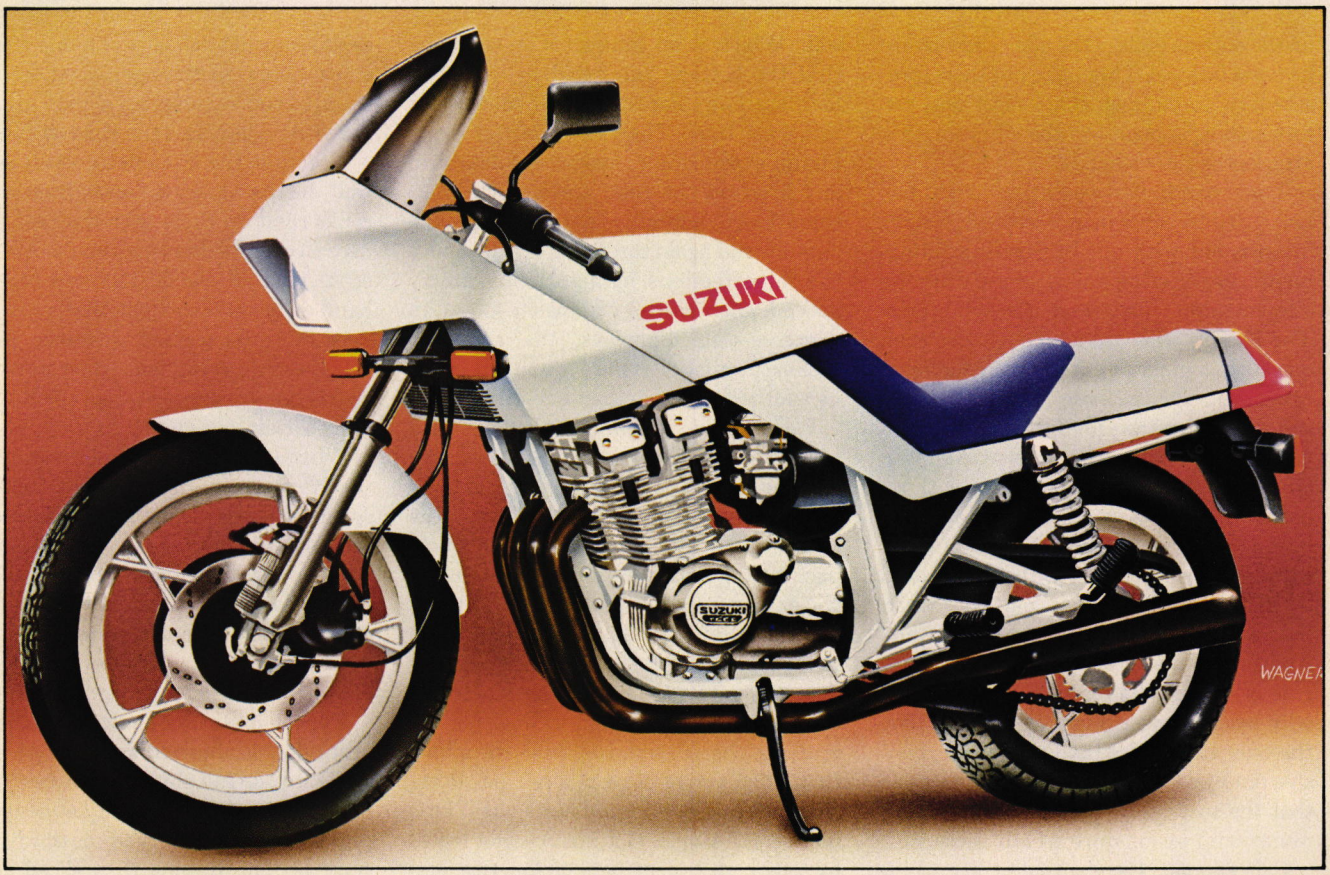
• If merely having visual impact is the Katana's primary reason for being, then it is a rousing, unqualified success. Because no matter where this motorcycle goes, it turns heads and draws stares like a flasher at a church social. But while there's no doubt that Muth's creation is the most spellbinding motorcycle to come along in quite some time, there is some question as to *why:* Do people gawk at it because it is pleasing to the eye or is it simply too bizarre for anyone to *not* look at?

There are no conclusive answers, of course, since beauty is, as they say, in the eye of the beholder. But in our travels with the Katana during the test, we asked every interested party we encountered for his opinion of the styling; and the majority voiced open hostility for the bike's shark-nosed, one-of-a-kind looks, although a respectable number of viewers absolutely *loved* the thing. But perhaps the most revealing observation was that not just the anti-Katanans found fault with the styling; many of the people who were unabashed in their affection for the Katana ultimately conceded that yes, there *is* something that's not quite right about its looks. No one was either willing or able to put his finger on the cause, but it was clear nonetheless that there indeed is something askew in the graphics.

Okay, but what? Well, all we can offer is our opinion, which is that the Katana's appearance is hampered by one reasonably damaging styling foul-up that is further magnified by several less-serious *faux pas*. The worst offense is that, to us, at least, the Katana looks like it was styled by two people who never met—one who designed the front half and another who did the rear. We know, obviously, that Helmut Muth designed *both* halves; but we still see the Katana as a confused motorcycle, one whose front seems to belong on some other bike's rear. The front area of the Katana is a futuristic statement made with torpedo-like shapes, sharp corners and heavy sculptures, all finished in high-gloss silver. But there's not a trace of those elements at the rear (using the termination of the sidecovers below the seat as the line of demarcation); the tailpiece is rounded, soft-cornered and conventionally styled, even by contemporary standards, and the finish is a dark blue semi-gloss on a stubbled surface. Not exactly graphic continuity, is it?

That thematic war is waged in other front-vs.-rear comparisons as well. The way in which the "nose cone" fairing and downswept sidecovers blend into the gas tank lends the front bodywork (with the exception of the mini-windshield, which looks for all the world like an afterthought) a kind of Buck Rogers unit-construction effect; but the treatment at the rear seems just the opposite, using a juxtaposition of different colors and shapes to accentuate the independence of the various pieces. Consequently, any visual excitement generated by the Galactican overtones that predominate at the front of the Muthbike comes to a screeching halt at the rather pedestrian rear end.

Undoubtedly, Muth had a clear vision he was trying to impart with his use of contradictory elements on the Katana, but that vision is not so clear to us in the bike's overall effect. And even certain individual styling elements fail to reveal Muth's reasons for using them. The plas-



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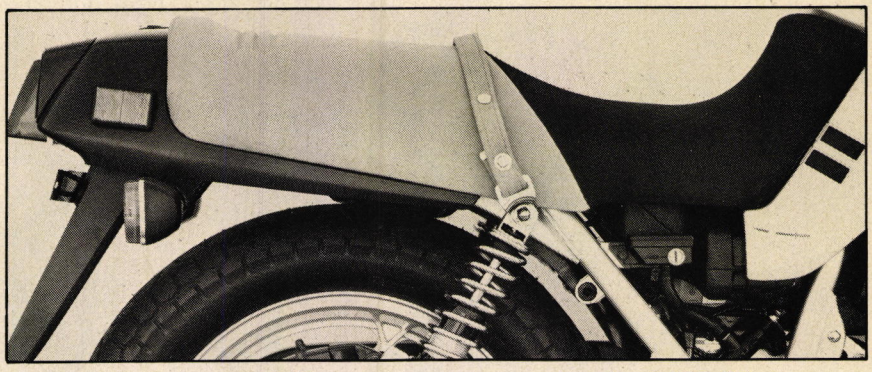
Katana's interesting but dated asymmetrical speedo/tach design

Shades of Super Hawk!



©1981 VIC HUBER

Rear quarters display cut-off sidecover, two-tone seat and stubble-finish tailpiece

Something's missing, not the least of which is continuity.

tic sidecovers, for example, sweep downward from the gas tank, turn rearward and then abruptly end, exposing the rear master cylinder on the right side, and the fusebox and voltage regulator on the left. And while Muth may have felt that motorcyclists, being gearheads by nature, would enjoy seeing exposed mechanicals staring out from under the seat, the ones we talked to *didn't*. Many of them, in fact, thought that those parts were in plain view only because some kind of smaller sidecover had fallen off.

A similar indictment could be brought against the seat, which looks as though Muth was trying to combine the appearance of a roadrace-style saddle with the function of a dual seat. That would seem to be the logical explanation for why the dished-out front portion of the seat is upholstered in a dark blue material while the rear half is done up in grey. The roadracy effect, if that's what it was supposed to be, would have been much stronger had the tailpiece also been painted glossy grey and extended forward beneath the sides of the seat to meet the abbreviated sidecovers. And if the grey segment of the seat were then slightly recontoured to fit flush with the bodywork, it would look like part of the tailpiece but actually be something that a passenger could comfortably sit on.

Those are our main quibbles with the Katana as a styling exercise, but there are a few other details—smaller ones, however—that we find incongruous with the bike's alleged concept. One is the old-fashioned way in which the tach and speedo needles are oriented in the single instrument pod. The speedo needle on the left is in the 4 o'clock position at rest and the tach needle is in the 10 o'clock position, parallel to and above the speedo needle. Confused? It doesn't get any easier once the needles start moving, either, for even though they both rotate clockwise, they *seem* to be going in opposite directions. Naturally, you get used to the unusual action of the needles within your first few hours in the Katana's saddle; but the point is that this idea, which dates back to the Honda Super Hawk, Suzuki X-6 and other Sixties-vintage models, puts style so far ahead of readability that it was abandoned, even back then, in favor of something less confusing. So it really seems totally out of place on a motorcycle that's supposed to be pointing the way to the future.

Then there are the Katana's numerous styling geegaws and gimcracks that, in their own way, make even less sense than the instruments. Some good examples are the little vents and grilles placed in strategic locations on the bodywork—some real, some fake, *all* non-functional with the possible exception of those on the deeply valanced front fender. But at least the two large black rectangles on each sidecover are *potentially* functional: The lefthand two are real push-for-on, push-for-off microswitches (that are not, however, wired up to the Katana's electrical system; you have to do that yourself should you decide to install some accessories requiring electrical power), but the righthanders are fakes—although the right sidecover will accept the real switches should you ever need *four* on-off controls.

In the end, our criticisms, especially these last few, may seem like needless nitpicks; but bikes like the Katana are often considered blueprints for the future, whether or not they were *intended* as such, and we don't think that the future has anything to do with 15-year-old instrumentation or fake louvers or anything of the sort. To most motorcyclists, the only thing that's worse than form that interferes with function is form that *pretends* to be function. And the Katana simply has too much of that ingredient, be it a motorcycle of the past, present or future.

Funny thing is, we actually *like* Muth's basic moto-concept but just don't agree with the busy inconsistency of its execution. It's easy, of course, for us to play Monday Morning Quarterback in this situation, since we weren't the ones who had to make the decisions that affected the Katana's styling. But all's fair in love and motorcycle design, and since we've taken our best shots at Mr. Muth's handiwork, we thought it only fair to give him, and anyone else, a chance to critique *our* styling tastes. So we commissioned illustrator Mark Wagner to work up the rendering you see here, a depiction of a bike that we think embodies the spirit and the concept of a Katana but leaves behind the styling-oriented problems we've discussed herein. The solo/dual seat treatment was handled in the way we outlined earlier, the rear of the bike was restyled to better complement the front, and the windshield was integrated rather than looking like a last-minute add-on. Some of the original bike's conflicting, converging sculptured lines had to go away, as well, and we also tried to rid our bike of the nose-heavy, downhill-running feel that is so evident on the Katana.

Is it an improvement? Well, only you can answer that correctly. We think it is, naturally, but that's just our opinion. And you know how opinions are: They're like bellybuttons—everybody has one but few ever match. Besides, in the end, everything you've read here—the good, the so-so and even the bad—could prove to be conclusive evidence that Muth was right after all. Because there are about ten times as many words about styling written here than ever before published in any one article about a Suzuki motorcycle.

That's an accomplishment in itself; and by that yardstick, the Katana has emerged triumphant. —*Paul Dean*

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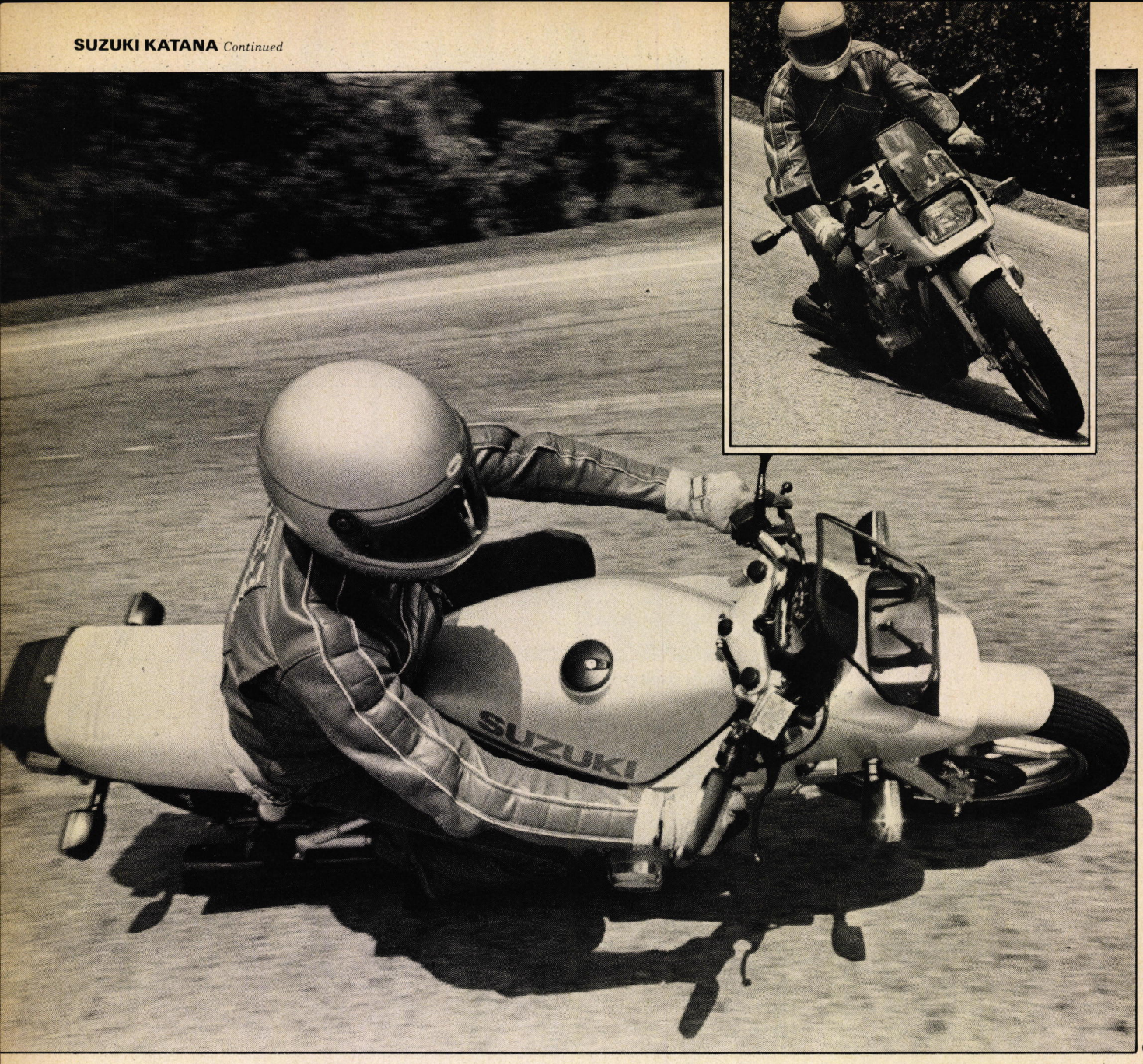


©1981 RICH COX

its name ("sword" in Japanese), following the rider's commands in classic GS Suzuki style—precisely, quickly and with relative ease. It does take a firmer push on the narrow clip-ons to initiate a turn than on the wide-barred GS1100, but some of that is due to the extra 15mm of trail plugged into the steering geometry to enhance the high-speed stability.

Not surprisingly, the Katana *seemed* as though it wanted to handle even better at the softest suspension settings, but it used up its ground clearance too easily. Both the side- and centerstand bashed violently into the pavement on left-handers, and the centerstand alone did likewise going right. Were it not for those stands, though, the Katana would probably bank over as far as the V-rated tires would allow. The black-chrome exhaust system tucks in just a smidgen further than the 1100's, and the pegs are well up out of the way. So the best advice for serious go-fasters is to remove the centerstand altogether and bend (or, eventually, *grind*) the sidestand up to where it won't drag.

Turning all of the fork/shock adjustments up to full-hard posed other cornering problems, the most notable of which was a pronounced tendency for the wheels to chatter off-line when they encountered rough pavement. There was a trace of that chattering at the optimum handling settings as well, but it was a factor only on extremely rough surfaces.

In all fairness to the Katana, it should be pointed out that it indeed does a lot of things very well, despite the criticisms that have been leveled at it here. And on a smooth, twisty road in particular, it's a sheer joy to ride fast. It's at its best when you're tucked in behind the mini-windscreen, the tach needle is hovering in the serious power zone and you're carving up a twisty back road as though vertical riding had just been made illegal. The harder and more aggressively you push it—up to the limits of the tires and the bank angles, of course—the better it feels.

It's also in full-on mode that you'll probably appreciate the anti-dive apparatus built into the fork sliders. Like the similar system on Yamaha's 750 Seca, this device restricts the flow of damping oil when the front brake is applied, thereby limiting the amount/rate of fork compression so that, in theory, most of the original steering geometry is retained for maximum stability. Both systems, however, utilize a pressure-relief valve that allows some suspension

compression if the wheel hits a sizable bump—and that's a useful feature, since it prevents wheel hop and potential fork damage when braking on bumpy surfaces. What's *not* so useful is that grabbing a big handful of front brake also unseats the relief valve, thereby allowing almost as much compression as a fork without anti-dive.

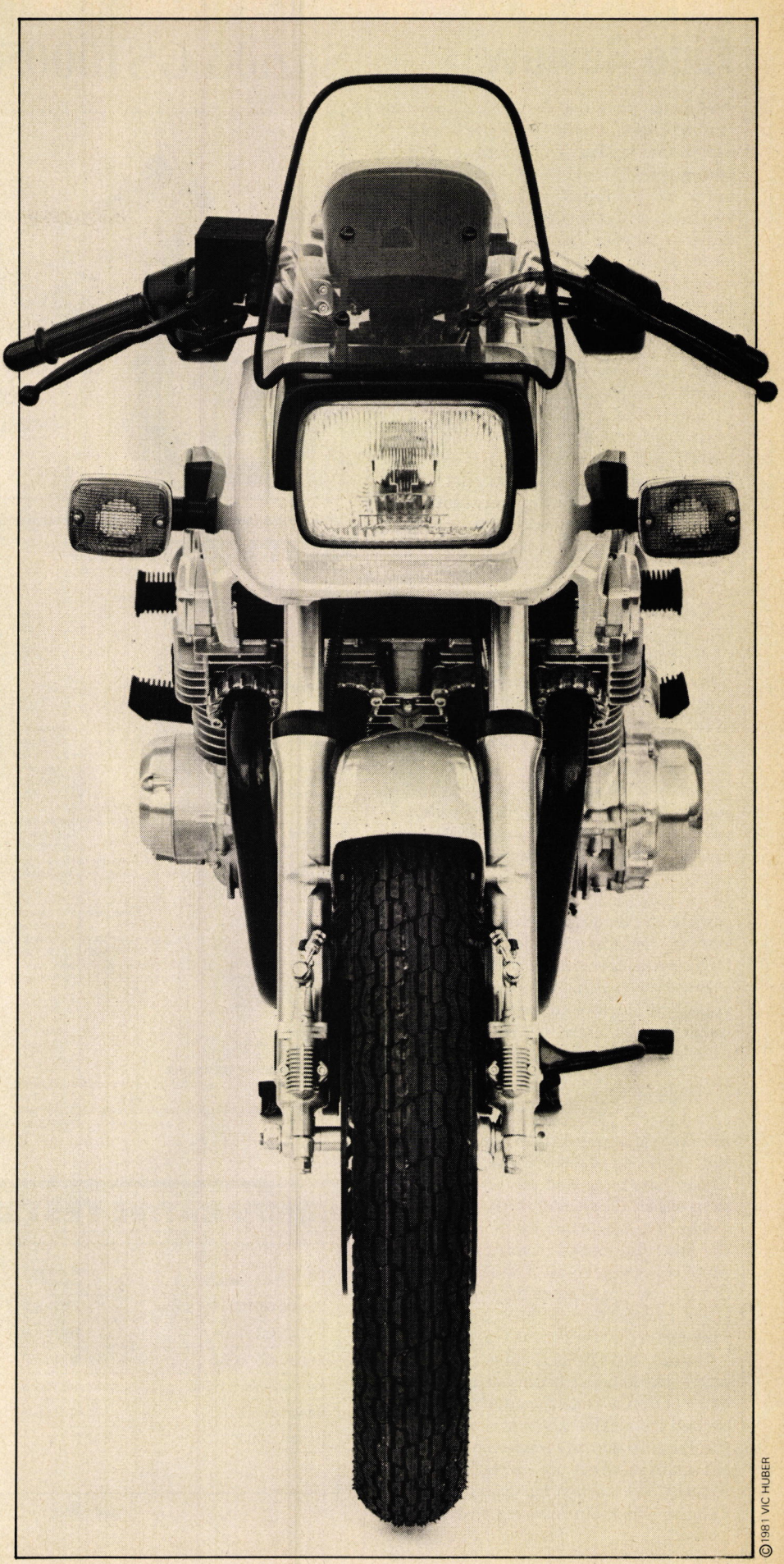
The operative word, though, is "almost." There *is* a reduction in front-end dive with the Suzuki's system, ranging from very little under some conditions to, oh, about an inch under others. And even though it is virtually impossible to predict which conditions will result in what amount of anti-dive, the fact is that *any* amount of compression resistance is more stabilizing during a hard stop than no resistance at all.

While the Katana's anti-dive certainly is not perfect, the more we used it the more we grew to appreciate its presence. The same could be said for the styling, as well, since in the beginning we all thought the Katana's looks were just short of hideous. But we got used to them after awhile, never really growing to love those alien features but getting almost to *like* them.

And therein lies the telling irony. Because our feelings about the Katana as a complete motorcycle were equally lukewarm. But those feelings had nothing to do with the styling. They had instead to do with the fact that attempting to make the Katana's mechanicals live up to Muth's café-futuro image had seriously compromised what makes a GS1100 so fabulously special. Oh, the Katana is a nice enough bike, all right—fast, good-handling, dead-reliable, eye-catching—but something important is missing. And that something is the *best* thing the bike could have had: It's missing its purity of function—its *Suzukiness*, if you will.

None of this, of course, is to imply that you shouldn't buy a Katana; it's only advising you to buy one for the right reasons. Buying one because you're infatuated with its unique looks is a right reason, and so is buying one because you think it might someday become a collector's item. And simply wanting to be the first on the block to own one isn't such a bad reason, either. But you shouldn't buy a Katana for the same kinds of practical reasons that might entice you to buy a regular Suzuki; because even though the Katana has successfully authored a new and unconservative image for Suzuki motorcycles, a bit of the old and more sensible one seems to have been lost somewhere in the translation.

Nobody has to hit you over the head with a two-by-four to make you understand what *that* means, do they? •



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Continued

Ride Review

• With the arrival of the Katana, other motorcycles suddenly seem stuck with earthbound styling. The sharply-angled fairing with its mini-shield looks like it can propel the Katana to light-speed velocities all on its own. And the tantalizing disparity between front and rear styling perfectly emphasizes the bike's half-armored, half-naked star-warrior appearance, to me.

Looks aren't all the flashy Suzuki has going for it, either. The racer-like riding position conveys a strong sense of balance, command and agility.

Unfortunately, much of this feeling of control is undone by the Katana's extremely stiff suspension. I found myself bouncing off the seat even on relatively smooth pavement. But for me, that's a minor defect. Maybe beauty *is* only skin deep, but what beautiful skin the Katana has. *Tash Matsuoka*

• Believe me, I really want to like the Katana. The idea of an all-out street racer with styling to set it apart from a world of moto-sameness is enough to send me running down to the bank without ever seeing or riding the bike. But the trouble is, I did see and ride the Katana. And it's just too much of everything.

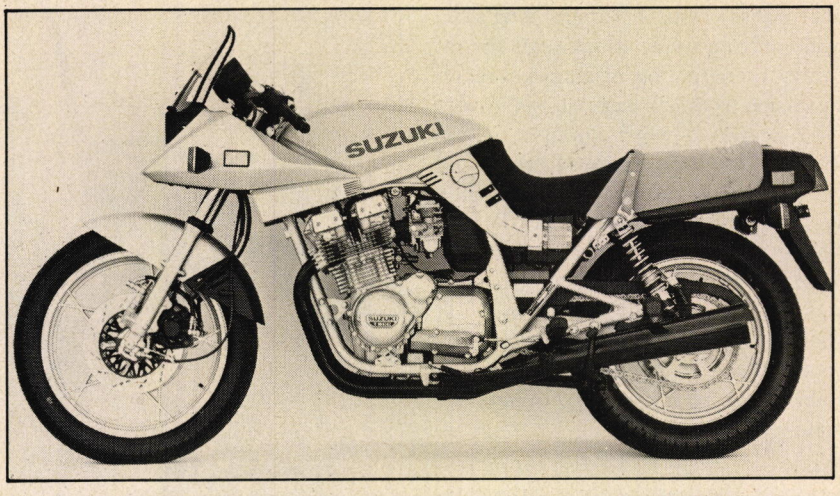
First of all, it's too racy. Painfully stiff suspension and a prenatal riding position see to it that the Katana can't be used for long-haul traveling, casual cruising or even medium-distance fun rides. And it's simply too styled. I want to be noticed, not gawked-at. For my tastes, too many of the Katana's features are designed to be different but not necessarily better.

But the idea behind the Katana is still appealing. I'd love to own it, if only I didn't have to buy so much of it. Just a little less would do. *—Ron Lawson*

• I stood and sighed with the rest of the crowd at the 1980 Cologne Show when Suzuki first unveiled the Muth-designed Katana. A year of reflection and familiarization hasn't changed my first impression, either. The GS1000S Katana still looks ugly to me. In fact, the more I look at the bike, the more I wonder just what Muth was trying to do. The Katana was Suzuki's chance to make the world's best street racer out of the best all-around roadster on the market: the GS1100.

Instead, Suzuki has built a bike that draws attention only because it looks odd, and it performs worse than the bike it was derived from. The motor is slower than the Eleven's and the suspension is stiff enough to be all but useless on the street. Actually, my reaction *has* changed since Cologne—now I'm annoyed instead of amused. *—David Dewhurst*

Suzuki GS1000S Katana



SPECIFICATIONS:

IMPORTER: U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation
3251 East Imperial Highway
Brea, California 92621

CATEGORY: street

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $4499

ENGINE

Type ..... four-stroke transverse vertical four
Valve arrangement ..... double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder
Bore and stroke ..... 70.0mm x 64.8mm
Displacement 997.5cc
Compression ratio 9.5:1
Carburetion ..... four 34mm Mikuni constant-vacuum
Air filter ..... disposable paper element
Lubrication ..... wet sump
Starting system ..... electric only
Ignition ..... transistorized breakerless
Charging system ..... 12-volt; alternator, voltage regulator, rectifier

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive ..... helical gears; 1.776:1 ratio
Clutch ..... wet, multi-plate
Final drive ..... #630 chain (¾-in. pitch, ⅜-in. width); 2.800:1 (15/42) ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	2.500	12.429	6.1
II	1.778	8.838	8.5
III	1.381	6.865	11.5
IV	1.125	5.593	13.5
V	0.962	4.780	15.7

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front ..... 37mm stanchion tube diameter, 4-way adjustable spring preload/5.5 in. (140mm)
Rear ..... 4-way adjustable rebound damping, 5-way adjustable spring preload/5.0 in. (127mm)

BRAKES

Front .... dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.8-in. (275mm) discs
Rear ..... double-action hydraulic caliper, 10.8-in. (275mm) disc

TIRES

Front ..... 3.50V19 Bridgestone Mag Mopus L303
Rear ..... 4.50V17 Bridgestone Mag Mopus G506

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Weight ..... 525 lbs. (238kg)
Weight distribution ..... 46.7% front, 53.3% rear
Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) ..... 1005 lbs. (456kg)
Wheelbase ..... 59.8 to 60.5 in. (1519 to 1537mm)
Seat height ..... 30.8 in. (782mm)
Handlebar width ..... adjustable from 28.0 in (711mm) to 31.3 in. (795mm)
Footpeg height ..... 15.5 in. (394mm)
Ground clearance ..... 6.5 in. (165mm), at exhaust pipe
Steering head angle ..... 28.5 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail ..... 4.6 in. (118mm)
Frame ..... tubular mild steel, double front downtubes
Oil capacity ..... 3.4 qt. (3.2/)
Fuel tank ..... steel, 5.4 gal. (20.5/), including 0.4 gal. (1.5/) reserve
Instrumentation ..... tachometer, speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero

PERFORMANCE

Fuel consumption ..... 33 to 51 mpg (14 to 22 km/l)
Range, maximum ..... 178 to 275 miles (286 to 442km)
Range, reserve only ..... 13 to 20 miles (21 to 32km)
Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated ..... 30 mph actual
Speedometer error, 55 mph indicated ..... 55 mph actual
Best ¼-mile acceleration ..... 11.397 sec., 118.70 mph (191 kph)
Top speed (calculated) ..... 141 mph (227 kph)
Stopping distance from 30 mph ..... 32 ft. (10 m)
Stopping distance from 60 mph ..... 129 ft. (39 m)

WARRANTY: 12 months unlimited mileage

AVAILABLE COLOR: silver only

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

Make	Quarter-Mile, sec/mph	Top Speed, mph	Weight, lbs	Stopping Distance From 60 mph, ft.
Suzuki GS1000S Katana	11.39/118.7	141	525	129
Suzuki GS1100EX	11.36/118.6	141	535	123
Suzuki GS1000E	11.98/113.9	136	528	137
Kawasaki GPz1100	11.44/116.3	133	538	158
Kawasaki KZ1000J	11.62/116.3	130	521	135
Honda CB900F	12.21/111.1	141	547	130

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GS-450E

Plenty of punch, easy handling and high style. That's what the 1982 GS-450E is all about.

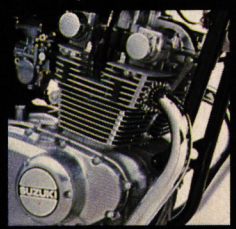
A fuel-efficient DOHC Twin with gear-driven counterbalancer is what makes it go. And go it does!

Front air forks and needle bearing suspended swing arm make it handle like a canyon cat.

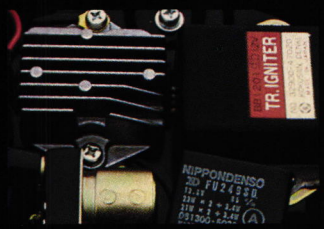
And the style? Well, the black accents and clean, sleek lines will get you plenty of looks.

Check it out at your Suzuki dealer. It's loaded with pizazz.

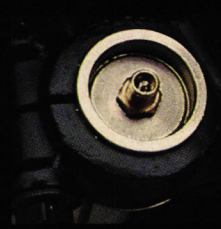
Powerful DOHC engine: Delivers performance and fuel efficiency. Features gear-driven counterbalancer for extra smoothness. Plus 6-speed transmission.



Transistorized ignition: This maintenance-free ignition system features electronic advance for added performance.



Front air forks: Provide better handling and ride under all conditions.



You can't get a better warranty from any other motorcycle company. But then you can't get a better streetbike than a Suzuki. Offered only in the 48 contiguous United States and Alaska. Refer to U.S. Suzuki GS, GN Model "Limited Warranty Policy" at Suzuki dealerships. A similar warranty is offered in Canada.

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MINITEST:

Italjet 350T Trials

America and Italy on trial against the observed world.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 LEN WEED

• Good, bad or otherwise, Italjet's 350T is the most different observed-trials motorcycle to come along in over a decade. It's not much different mechanically, even by trials standards in which the most recent innovation was the two-stroke motor. Instead, the Italjet is extraordinary in two other ways: It's not Spanish, like its three main competitors, Bultaco, Montesa and OSSA, and it wasn't developed by European riders.

The significance of all this for American trials riders is that the driving force behind the Italian-built Italjet *is* an American—former world trials champion Bernie Schreiber. And so most of the mechanical and performance dissimilarities between the 350T and other trials bikes are a measure of just how much influence Schreiber has had on the 350T's development.

Actually, there is one bike to which the Italjet bears remarkable resemblance in certain areas—especially the cylinder—and that's the popular Bultaco 340 Sherpa T. Which should be no real surprise, since it was, after all, on the Bultaco that Schreiber won his championship in 1980. And it's no coincidence that the head man at Italjet, Leo Tatarini, is also the Bultaco importer for Italy. So when the time came to develop a competitive cylinder layout for the Italjet, it was only logical to "borrow" some of the finer points from Bultaco's proven design. But because Italjet wanted its bike to have primary kickstarting, a useful feature not found on other big-bore trials iron, Tatarini & Co. had to design their own bottom end, explaining why that part of the motor is decidedly un-Bultaco-looking.

That ability to be kickstarted in gear can be a major advantage for expert and novice alike. But engine similarities or not, the Italjet's personality differs from the Bultaco's in ways that a novice probably won't appreciate. The 350T's comparatively light flywheel effect is one of them, undoubtedly reflecting Schreiber's preference for a quick-revving motor that lets him attack sections with a vengeance. And while expert riders might easily learn to deal with that tendency to spurt forward more abruptly than the Bultaco when the throttle is cracked open, a novice likely will not.

Aside from its questionable flywheel inertia, however, the Italjet's motor has excellent power throughout its entire rpm range. And if the five-speed gearbox is notched up to the next-highest gear, the motor still can pull strongly but its all-of-a-sudden reaction to the throttle is diminished quite a lot. That is, *if* you can find the next gear; you see, the 350T has a wretched shifting mechanism that makes gearchanging an aggravating, two-kick affair. Kickstarting is a bit difficult, too, due to the shortness of the kick lever, but at least the Italjet normally fires off on the first prod.

There are vague Bultaco/Italjet likenesses in the chassis, as well, but nothing stands out as being a blatant copy. The frame is typical trials-bike fare—no cradle tubes beneath the engine, with only an alloy bash plate linking downtube to swingarm pivot. The 350T is en-

This green machine from Italy was engineered by American Bernie Schreiber

And it was built for expert trials riders, even if they aren't from Spain.

dowed with a tad more ground clearance than usual, though, again reflecting Schreiber's tendency to ride over *anything*, regardless of how big.

That generous chassis height does, however, make for a high center of gravity that's evident in the ease with which the 350T will wheelie, either by accident or on purpose. An expert can use that characteristic to his advantage most of the time, especially when he needs to do a floater turn in a very tight section. But like the light flywheel effect, a too-light front end is usually a disadvantage for riders of lesser skills. This is particularly true on uphill turns or off-cambers where the Italjet's front wheel doesn't like to stay on the ground where it can offer the novice the kind of steering control he needs.

Other minor complaints about the Italjet include its rather wide swingarm pivot. That's why there's a higher-than-normal incidence of rocks hitting the footpegs, the protruding brake pedal and the rider's boots. But for all its shortcomings, the bright green Italjet 350T is remarkably competent for a bike in only its first year of production. Experts could, in fact, win on it with just a bit of good fortune. If its American development rider provides the right input, and if its Italian builder responds, this motorcycle could be competitive with *anyone* on it. And in the process, prove that a trials bike doesn't necessarily have to say "Made in Spain" on the tank to be a winner. —*David Dewhurst*

ITALJET 350T

Importer: Strada International, Inc. / Italjet USA
13148 Saticoy Street
North Hollywood, California 91605

Category	observed trials
Suggested retail price:	$2699
Engine type	two-stroke vertical single
Port arrangement	one piston-controlled intake, two transfers, one exhaust
Bore and stroke	83.2mm x 60.0mm
Displacement	326.2cc
Compression ratio (uncorrected)	9.0:1
Carburetion	one 28mm DellOrto slide / needle
Gearbox	6-speed
Front fork / wheel travel	35mm stanchion tube diameter / 6.8 in. (173mm)
Rear shocks / wheel travel	3-way adjustable spring preload / 5.3 in. (135mm)
Wheelbase	51.3 to 52.5 in. (1303 to 1334mm)
Seat height	30.0 in. (762mm)
Weight	218 lbs. (99kg)
Warranty	90 days parts only
Available color	green only

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RM-60: *Here's a hot racer for young winners. It's styled after the big RMs, and features front air forks for '82.*

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Come into your local Suzuki dealer, now. You'll save yourself a bundle on a little yellow machine, and make your little rider very happy.

In fact, take a look at all the 1982 Suzuki performers. You might even want to treat yourself to one for Christmas. After all, 'tis the season...

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ROAD TEST:

Harley-Davidson FXRS Super Glide II

A softer grip on the engine means a firmer grip on the street-cruising crown.

BY TASH MATSUOKA

Maybe, as mythology has it, Italians really do build the flashiest motorcycles, Germans the classiest and Japanese the fastest. But if there's any question as to who builds the ultimate street cruisers, Harley-Davidson's new FXRS Super Glide II should erase all doubts: Americans still build the profilers with the most seductive presence on Main Street.

There's persuasive evidence to that effect in this Harley's conspicuous display of boulevard goodies: a pretentiously large motor, a black-and-red paint scheme, chromed and flat-black metalwork, a sensuously shaped and textured seat, gold pinstriping, staggered dual exhausts with a pleasing mellow sound, white-letter tires, pull-back handlebar, highway pegs and more. And while there is nothing star-

tlingly new in all of this, the blend on the FXRS is so *right* that this might be the closest any manufacturer has ever come to producing the perfect box-stock cruiser.

But mean, lean Harleys have been cruising the streets for decades; what makes this one so special? Nothing less than a revolutionary breakthrough: The FXRS is the first Harley to give its rider the comfort he wants everyone to think he has.

For one thing, Harley's engineers have, believe it or not, removed the mind-dulling vibrations on this cruiser without taking away the precious vibes. The FXRS (just like the plainer FXR and the touring FLT) has a rubberized engine-mounting system that lets the massive jolts of the big 80-inch vee-twin rock and roll without forcing the chassis and the rider along for the dance. At idle, the duo of huge pistons shakes everything from the tires to the flesh on your face. Yet it's more like a vibro-massage than an attack on your health. And it gives the FXRS that extra shot of old-fashioned drama at stoplights.

Once underway, the disturbing aspects of the vibration are cancelled out by the rubber. And most of the buzzes that escape those elastic engine mounts at higher rpm (anything over 3000 rpm is "higher" on a Harley) are caught by thick, double-level footpeg covers and the rubber handlebar mounts. The handlebar has so much give, though, that it's scary at first. If you can yank it two inches when the FXRS isn't moving, you wonder what will happen when you try to take a curve. But in actual use the connection is dependably solid. And this particular example of rubberization gives the FXRS something that few Harleys ever had—mirrors that work.

Even with all of this strategically placed rubber, some shakes do reach you, but mostly as indications of vee-twin life. Vibes, not vibrations. And so the powerplant seems much friendlier to the rider than on previous cruising Glides without seeming the least bit tamer to onlookers. It's as though your giant Doberman has finally accepted you but still doesn't like other people any more than before.

Harley didn't just give the 80-inch motor an isolation system to chew on and then shove it into an existing chassis, either. The FXRS has the first frame in the company's long history designed from scratch with the aid of a *computer*. And if traditionalists think that's shocking, they're in for worse: Harley engineers programmed in more ground clearance than on previous Glides, specifically to improve *cornering capabilities*. Challenging Ducatis still isn't one of the FXRS's talents, but it isn't as limited in the lean-it-over department as its appearance might suggest. Predictable steering response combines with the new chassis and the typically broad H-D powerband to make this one of the easiest heavyweights to ride smoothly and briskly on country roads. It won't keep up with your friends on foreign iron in real contests of quick, but it also won't embarrass you during friendly fast-running, either. ther. And as testimony to the Glide II's new cornering ability, the tires on our test bike got scuffed to the very edges of the tread—just like on a sport bike.

Cruising advocates need not feel neglected by Milwaukee's rediscovery of sport-riding capabilities, however. Although rock-steadiness at speed often translates into trucklike heaviness in town, this isn't the case with the FXRS. You still can't flick it around like a lightweight, due to its stretched-out, 65-inch wheelbase and 594 pounds of heft. But because the FXRS has a low center of gravity, a steeper steering-head angle than other Glides and an abundant supply of usable power in any gear at virtually any rpm, it's surprisingly manageable in traffic.

Also, increasing the ground clearance has moved the seat up a mere 1.7 inches above the Low-Rider's ground-hugging 27 inches, preserving that low-down look so crucial to the profiling image. And the seat itself is a cruiser's dream come true. Its comfortable, well-padded contours sweep down for the rider and up for his passenger, climaxing in a backrest/sissybar combo. And a soft vinyl covering creates a remarkably effective simulation of black pillow leather that makes the seat seem truly luxurious.

Of course, even the world's best seat would be wasted on a motorcycle with poor suspension. And historically, Harley-Davidson cruisers have been cursed with oversprung shocks and forks that did little to absorb normal road imperfections. But

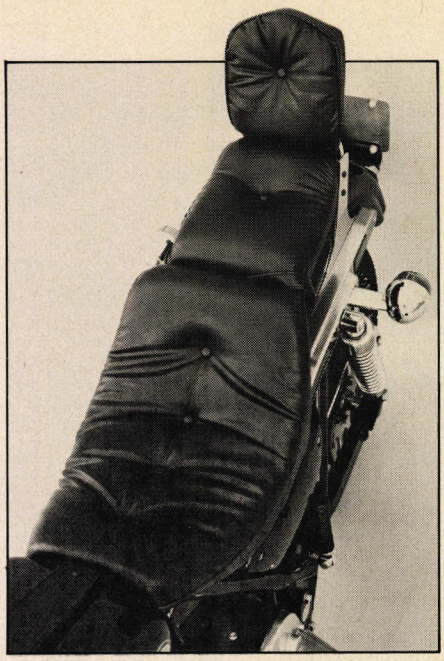
Continued

with the FXRS, Harley finally has a motorcycle with suspension that functions well by established world standards. The result is good ride quality and bump absorption. Not "good for Harley," that famous left-handed compliment that the people in Milwuakee have been shoveling off their doorstep for so long. Good, period.

Good, too, is the Glide II's low level of noise emissions, despite the bike's deep, soulful exhaust note. The key is Harley's ongoing attention to subtleties in the design and manufacture of engine internals—casting thicknesses, manufacturing tolerances, running clearances, etc.—that lead to significant reductions in mechanical noise. And since the EPA listens only to *total* sonic output when verifying a bike's compliance with noise regulations, that reduction in mechanical clatter allows a slight increase in exhaust rumble. So when you stand to the rear of this Harley when it's idling, you can almost hear distant straight pipes, yet it's still 100-percent legal. Milwaukee music lives.

Indeed. And the five-speed transmission, the first for a Harley cruiser, could make you want to sing along. Its shifting action is far superior to that of the old four-speed crash box, so you'll be able to make your moves with the smoothness this motorcycle's appearance demands. And finding neutral at stoplights is now routine, not the rare revelation it used to be.

Quarter-mile performance benefits from the new transmission, too: The FXRS's best run of 13.917 seconds at 93.41 mph puts it into the same second as the Ducati



FXRS seat is soft, supple, luxurious

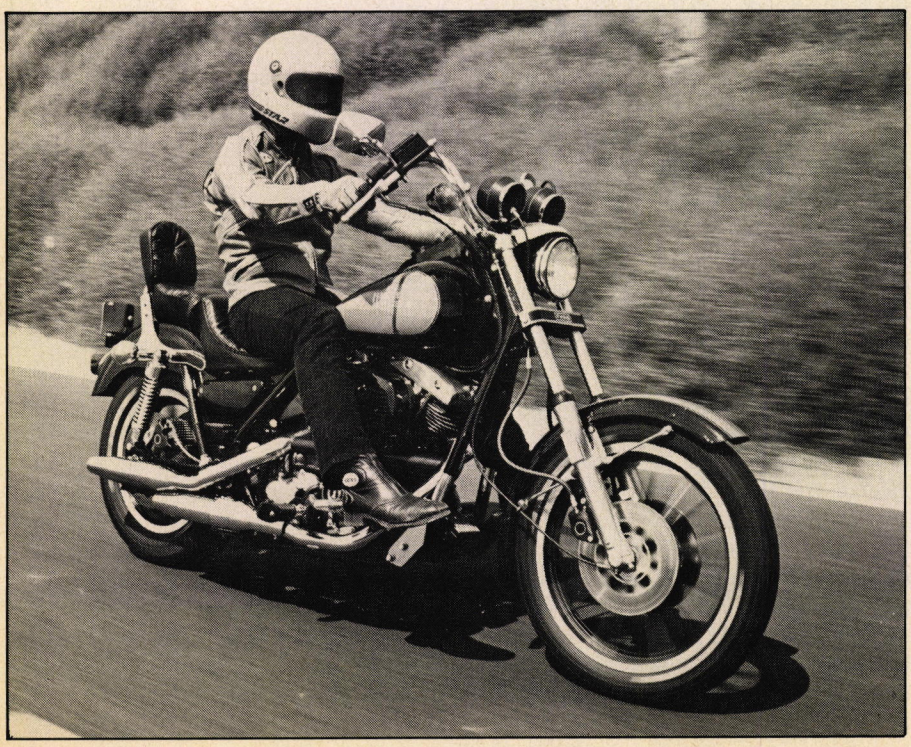
Think of it as the lowrider's La-Z-Boy.

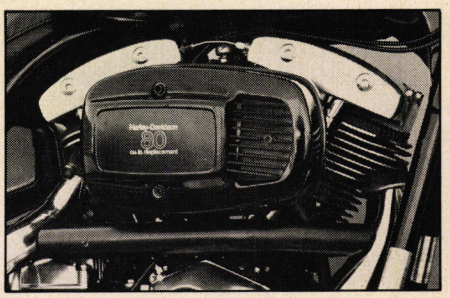
Darmah (13.41/97.5) and Yamaha XV920 (13.34/99.41). Even more important, the five-speed allows for a lower low gear and a higher high, with one more ratio in between. That makes the big vee's satisfying low-end grunt available at a greater variety of road speeds; and it also strengthens the Harleyists' argument that their brand's relaxed, soul-soothing momentum is an intelligent alternative to the hyperkinetic thrust of more rapid motorcycles.

Too bad Harley doesn't offer as soul-soothing a method of reducing that momentum. The FXRS can stop from 60 mph in an impressively short 124 feet—less distance than needed by a lot of pure high-performance bikes—but the dual front discs refuse to allow *easy* slowing. Despite dramatically improved braking performance on all Harleys for '82, the FXRS front grabbers are still resistant to subtle pressures. As a result, they don't really scrub off much speed until the veins begin to bulge in your right forearm and, in cases of extreme need, in your forehead.

A similar kind of physical effort is needed to work the clutch. The left-hand lever, like its counterpart on the other end of the handlebar, has been redesigned for easier use, and it is ergonomically more reasonable than the giant-hands-only monstrosities formerly used on Harleys. But the new lever still is connected to a traditionally massive, heavily sprung clutch and you can feel that heft.

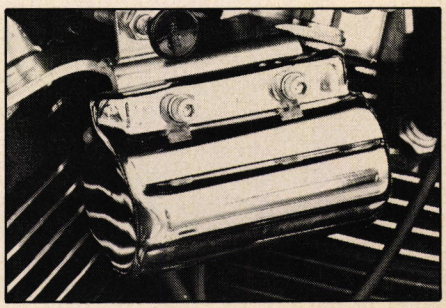
That's not the only place where H-D tradition quite literally gets in the way of riding pleasure. Harley continues to mount a bulky, protruding aircleaner on the right side of the basically narrow vee-twin motor that forces your right knee outward. On the other side, you have to ride with your left foot at the outer edge of the footpeg to avoid touching the bulge of the clutch housing with your heel. If you make contact at either place, you'll bypass the rubber engine-mount system and un-isolate yourself from vibrations. Training your body to adjust to this unnatural positioning of knee and foot isn't impossible, but it does detract from the air of relaxed naturalness that's supposed to be a big part of cruising.





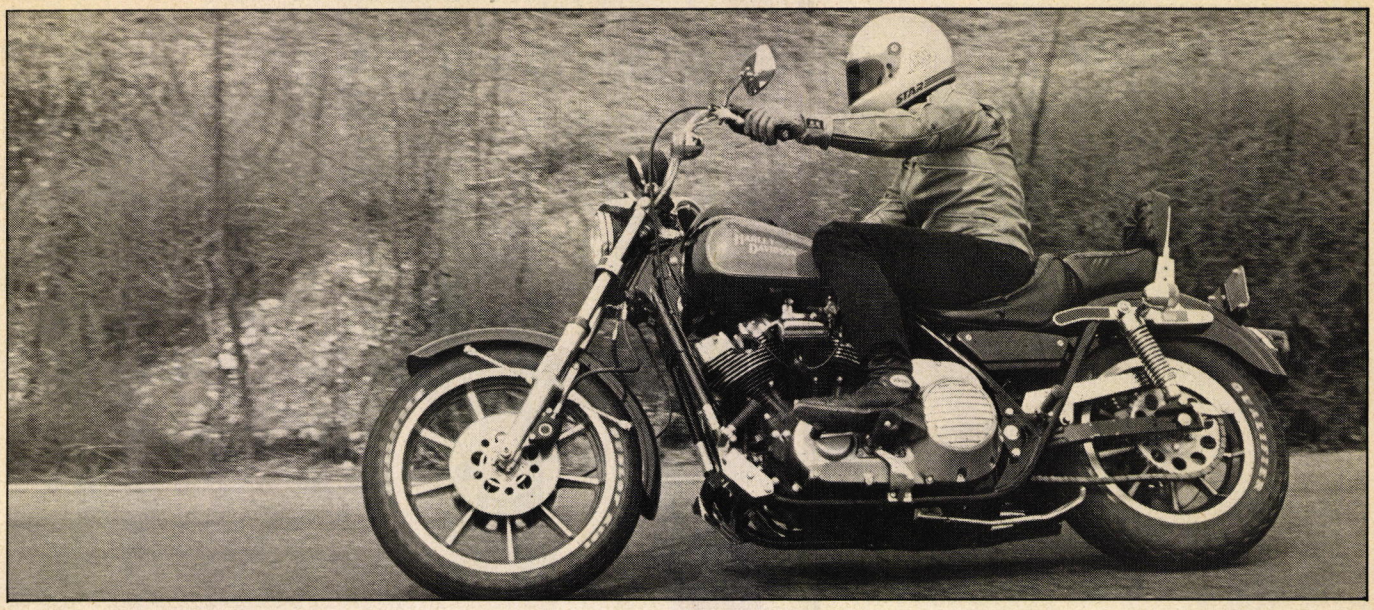
Airbox hides the motor from your eyes

But not the vibes from your leg.



Coil cover is age-old customizing ploy

If you can't hide it, chrome it.

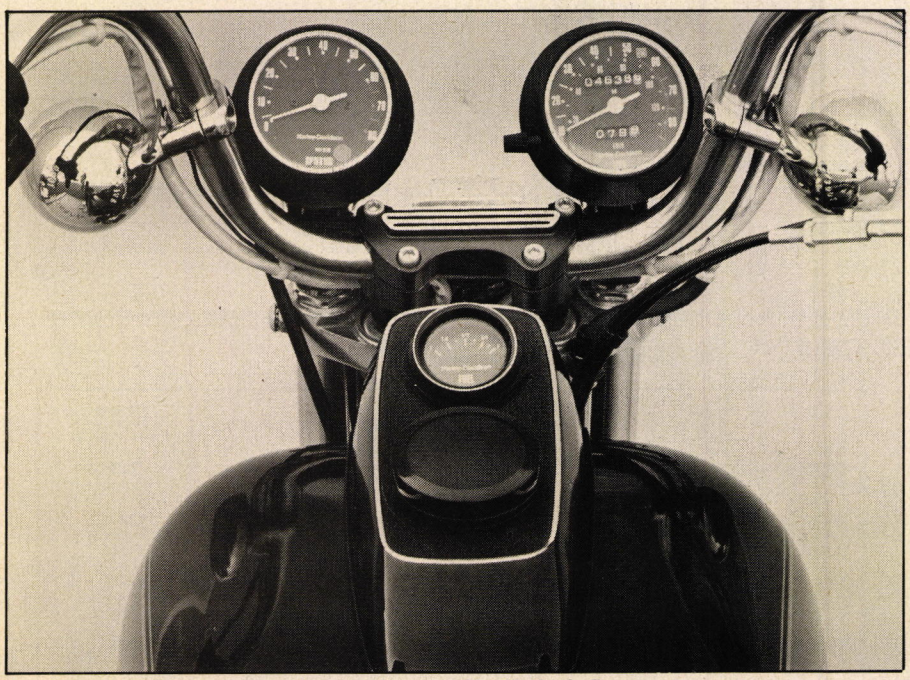


Other continuing traditions will require adjustments to your garage instead of to your body. Our test bike dribbled oil not only from the automatic chain oiler, but also from the front cylinder's pushrod tubes, the junction of the oil lines and the primary case, and the crankcase inlet for the charging-system wires. And while engine vibrations no longer threaten to de-brain the rider, they still do a good job of loosening nuts and bolts. An exhaust heat-shield came loose, and a rear exhaust-pipe bolt refused to stay put even after an application of Loctite. But we experienced no major failures and no disabling vibration-related problems. Harleys still have a way to go before they embody prevailing quality-control standards, but the firm is definitely improving.

What Harley-Davidson probably *won't* ever be able to improve is the emotional contact the FXRS's big, ancient vee-motor makes with the rider. The pounding, leisurely cadence of its two massive pistons isn't anything like the orchestrated whirring of contemporary multi-cylinder engines. Instead, it's more like the uneven beat of your own two-chambered heart. And the clicking, clattering, gurgling and occasional stuttering of the motor bears little resemblance to the near-perfection that typifies most modern engines.

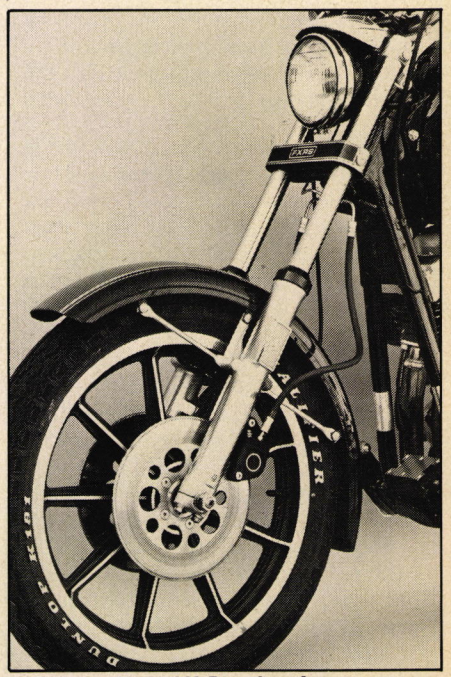
Still, somewhere within the mechanical being of this motorcycle is an *essence* that can't be measured with dynos, calipers and timing lights, something that won't read out on a graph of power characteristics or a list of technical features. Because drawing feelings out of the rider *is* the main performance of the FXRS. And the vibration-isolating system, frame, suspension and style only serve to point out that quality more clearly.

No, you can't measure the FXRS with the usual instruments, so put them away. All you have to check is your heart. If it says the FXRS is right for you, then that's all you need to know. Because in the cold light of a boulevard night, all the other cruisers are just pretenders. And the FXRS is what they're pretending to be. •



Usual Super Glide instrumentation supplemented by Harley's first-ever gas gauge

Plus there's now only one filler cap; not two.



Fork is not typical H-D cruiser fare

Finally, a Glide that actually glides.

Continued

Ride Review

• It's easy to appreciate why devotees of Harley-Davidsonism could find the new FXRS so appealing: a relatively smooth freeway ride, unabashedly good shifting, a comfortable seat, torque to spare and, lest you forget, the Look that no amount of copying has ever been able to duplicate. Even if you're not a Harley fan, there's a lot to like about the FXRS.

What I can't appreciate, though, is how the FXRS keeps reminding me that, after all, I'm only along for the ride. As far as I can tell, the rider model that was used to generate the FXRS ergonomics has a size six left foot to accommodate the left-side case bulge and still keep in contact with the footpeg, while its right leg has an air-cleaner-shaped crook in it for mounting the right foot on the highway peg. And as much as I might like the rest of the package, I'm not thusly configured.

—Larry Works

• I've never been what you would call a Harley-Davidson person. Which is why I've had to stretch my imagination to its outer limits to comprehend why anyone would pay good money for an H-D cruiser, a motorcycle that tries to beat you up every time you ride it.

So you can understand how surprised I was when I discovered that I actually *like* the FXRS. It accelerates with authority, brakes with competence, corners almost like a peg-dragger and rides with easy-chair comfort. And it's the first Harley I've ridden (besides the FLT Tour Glide) that doesn't vibrate like something you'd stick a quarter into at the Holiday Inn.

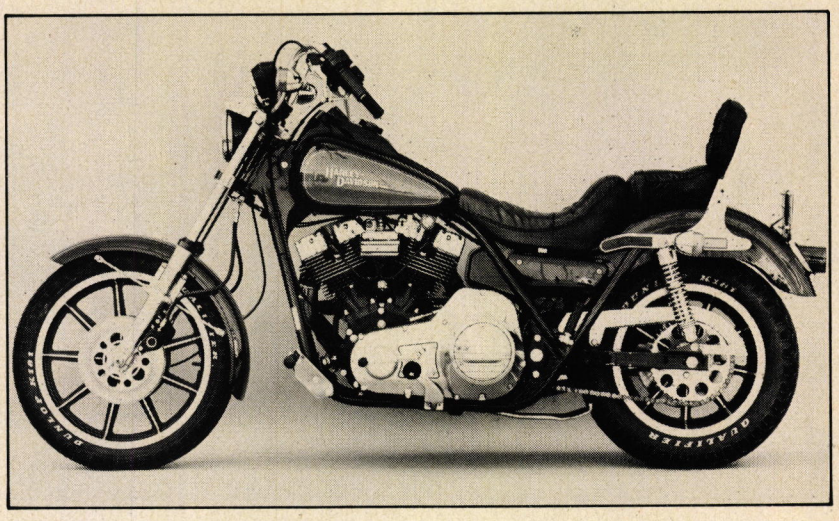
No, I'm still not a Harley-Davidson person; but if the company keeps improving its bikes at this alarming rate, I may have to change my lifestyle and apply for a full membership. *—Paul Dean*

• I feel a little uneasy riding the FXRS in my red leather jacket and full-face helmet. Somehow it just doesn't seem like the right stuff to wear. The Harley image is perhaps *black* leather and most certainly a bandana—but not red leather and full face protection—it just doesn't say Harley.

That feeling nagged at me until I realized that, below the typical Harley styling, the FXRS is, in some ways, different from most Harleys. It doesn't vibrate much, and the suspension and the brakes work well. But best of all, the new chassis lets the FXRS sweep through turns like few Harleys have done in the past. It's no roadracer, but *this* Harley works more like other, "normal" bikes on the road. So perhaps I should wear the clothing I use on other bikes and stop feeling uneasy just because of the traditional Harley image.

—David Dewhurst

Harley-Davidson FXRS



SPECIFICATIONS:

MANUFACTURER: Harley-Davidson Motorcycles
3700 West Juneau Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208

CATEGORY: street

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: $6990

ENGINE

Type	four-stroke tandem vee-twin
Valve arrangement	pushrod-operated overhead valves
Bore and stroke	88.8mm x 108.0mm
Displacement	1337.7cc
Compression ratio	7.4:1
Carburetion	one 38mm Keihin butterfly-type, with accelerator pump
Air filter	washable oiled foam
Lubrication	wet sump
Starting system	electric only
Ignition	transistorized breakerless, single coil
Charging system	12-volt; alternator, voltage regulator, rectifier

DRIVETRAIN

Primary drive	double-row chain; 1.542:1 ratio
Clutch	wet, multi-plate
Final drive	#530 chain (⅝-in pitch, ⅜-in width); 2.182:1 (22/48) ratio

Gear	Internal gear ratio	Overall gear ratio	MPH per 1000 RPM
I	3.241	10.904	6.7
II	2.210	7.436	9.9
III	1.603	5.394	13.6
IV	1.233	4.149	17.7
V	1.000	3.364	21.8

SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

Front	35mm stanchion tube diameter/6.3 in (160mm)
Rear	5-way adjustable spring preload/3.5 in. (89mm)

BRAKES

Front	dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.0-in. (255mm) discs
Rear	single-action hyraulic caliper, 11.6-in. (295mm) disc

TIRES

Front	MJ90-19 Dunlop K181 Qualifier
Rear	MT90-16 Dunlop K181 Qualifier

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Weight	594 lbs. (269kg)
Weight distribution	45.0% front, 55.0% rear
Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR)	1085 lbs. (492kg)
Wheelbase	64.5 to 65.3 in. (1638 to 1659mm)
Seat height	28.7 in. (729mm)
Handlebar width	28.0 in. (711mm)
Footpeg height	13.0 in. (330mm)
Ground clearance	6.0 in. (152mm), at engine cradle
Steering head angle	31.0 degrees from vertical
Front wheel trail	5.5 in. (140mm)
Frame	tubular and square-section mild steel, double front downtubes
Oil capacity	4.0 qt. (3.8/)
Fuel tank	steel, 4.2 gal. (16.0/), including 0.4 gal. (1.5/) reserve
Instrumentation	speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, tachometer, fuel gauge

PERFORMANCE

Fuel consumption	40 to 47 mpg (17 to 20 km/l)
Range, maximum	168 to 197 miles (270 to 317km)
Range, reserve only	16 to 19 miles (26 to 31km)
Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated	28 mph actual
Speedometer error, 55 mph indicated	52 mph actual
Best ¼-mile acceleration	13.917 sec., 93.07 mph (150kph)
Top speed (estimated)	109 mph (174kph)
Stopping distance from 30 mph	35 ft. (11m)
Stopping distance from 60 mph	124 ft. (38m)

WARRANTY: 6 months/6000 miles

AVAILABLE COLOR: black with red only

All weights and measurements are taken with machine unladen and fuel tank empty

COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

Make	Quarter-Mile, sec/mph	Top Speed, mph	Weight, lbs	Stopping Distance From 60 mph, ft.
Harley-Davidson FXRS	13.92/93.1	109	594	124
Harley-Davidson FLT Tour Glide	15.58/83.9	108	785	161
Ducati Darmah	13.41/97.5	118	487	120
Yamaha XS1100LH	11.99/113.5	130	562	133
Yamaha XV750 Virago	13.28/99.8	105	481	132
Yamaha XV920	13.34/99.4	111	509	146

MINITEST:

Kawasaki KZ305 CSR

Bite-sized bonanza.

• On the brink of its first birthday, Kawasaki's KZ305 CSR has reason to celebrate. It just might be the ideal streetbike for the small-sized rider. Kawasaki aims this motorcycle not only at diminutive street types though, but at the experienced outback biker who's new to the street.

If it seems that Kawasaki expects a lot from a little bike like this, it does. The 305 weighs in at 345 pounds, has a seat height of 29 inches and its twin-cylinder engine actually displaces just 306cc. As seen on paper, there's no doubt that this is a small motorcycle. But viewed against a plain backdrop with no size reference, the KZ305 is proportioned so well and has enough large-style features that it seems full-sized.

With front disc brake, stepped seat and passenger grabrail, the 305 connotes an immediate sense of bigness. But because it's actually smaller than it seems, it fits downsized frames—like my five-foot-two, 102-pound chassis—perfectly. The seat feels comfortable for short trips, the cruiser handlebar position isn't too extreme and best of all, you can sit on this motorcycle with both feet flat on the ground—unless you're inches shorter than I am. And whatever your size, you'll appreciate the easy action of the regular-sized clutch and front-brake levers. Since I'm someone who nearly always needs help opening a pickle jar and who invariably needs to hem pants, this bike started making me happy even before I turned on the engine.

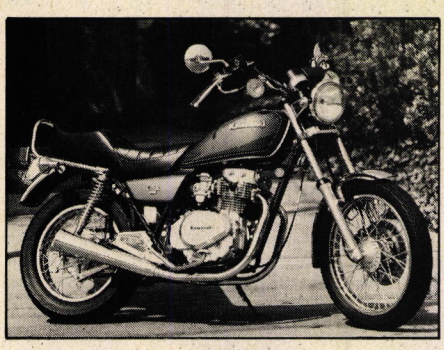
But after I pushed the electric starter button, things got even better. The 305's pipes began emitting full-toned exhaust notes that cranked up my grin-factor a full notch. Only the 305's cold-bloodedness is annoying. If it's left sitting for an hour-plus, you need full choke to fire off the little twin; and once started, it's difficult to place the choke at exactly the right setting for stumble-free riding until the engine warms completely.

Once on the road, however, the KZ305 performs smoothly and competently. Riding in town, the bike squirts forward instantly, obeying the throttle with enough spunk to get around four-wheelers at short notice. And the disc/drum-brake combination works just as efficiently. Shifts are precise, and the engine is torquey and willing to rev, saving you from constantly dipping into the gearbox for more get-up-and-go.

Cruising the freeway in sixth gear, the 305 remains stable, even while skimming over raingrooves. But it's just as much at home churning through the twisties, happily nicking peg to pavement or even revving exuberantly past 10,000 rpm. Kawasaki's 305 doesn't just look like a more-than-small machine—it handles like one, too. It's simply minus the squirreliness present in many small street bikes, and its engine isn't plagued with that screaming whine irritatingly common to many small motorcycles.

Clearly, it takes more than reading a specs sheet to appreciate the 305. In black and white only, the grins don't even emerge from between the lines. But mount up and ride. If you're a beginner, its light weight and small size are suitable encouragement to keep riding. Yet even if you've logged thousands of miles on streetbikes, the 305 still has enough pizzaz to talk you into a trip around the twisties. Kawasaki's competent, economical 305 lives up to its maker's expectations with style. And it *more* than lives up to the consumer's.

—Merry MacTavish



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 VIC HUBER

KAWASAKI KZ305 CSR

Importer: Kawasaki Motors Corporation
2009 East Edinger Avenue
Santa Ana, California 92711

Suggested retail price:	$1499
Engine type	four-stroke transverse vertical twin
Valve arrangement	single overhead camshaft
Bore and stroke	61.0mm x 52.4mm
Displacement	306.3cc
Compression ratio	9.5:1
Carburetion	two 32mm Keihin constant-vacuum
Gearbox	6-speed
Front fork / wheel travel	33mm stanchion tube diameter / 5.3 in. (135mm)
Rear shocks / wheel travel	5-way adjustable spring preload / 4.3 in. (109mm)
Wheelbase	54.0 to 55.3 in. (1372 to 1405mm)
Seat height	29.0 in. (737mm)
Weight	345 lbs. (156kg)
Best ¼-mile acceleration	15.726 sec., 80.57 mph (130 kph)
Top speed (calculated)	91 mph (146 kph)
Warranty	6 months
Available colors	Candy Crimson Red or Ebony

MINITEST:

Honda XR250R

When viewed through the proper eyepiece, there's none better.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 DAVID DEWHURST

• Quick, name three *really* good 250cc four-stroke dirt bikes you can buy right now. Okay, how about two? Er . . . would you believe *one*?

If you couldn't come up with any answers at all, it indicates one of two things: 1) either you judge four-strokes by two-stroke standards; or 2) you've never ridden a Honda XR250R Pro-Link.

Either excuse is understandable, but only the second one is acceptable. Because four-strokes really *do* need to be judged on their own merits, not by those that give bonus points to two-strokes. And when you do it right, the XR250R stands tall, both physically and otherwise, above the rest. Unfortunately, "the rest" right now is comprised of just one other bike—Yamaha's TT250. So when we tell you that the Honda is the absolute state-of-the-art in 250cc thumpers, it's kind of a hollow, backhanded compliment.

Before you two-stroke guys get too smug, however, you ought to know that the XR packs a one-two suspension punch that just might give your ring-ding fits. Suspension was one of the bike's real assets in '81 and it's even better for '82 with increased damping rates at both ends.

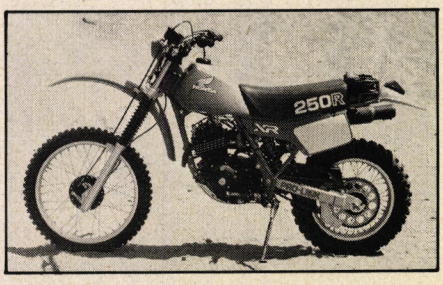
What this accomplished was to give the new XR virtually MX-quality bump-absorption by eliminating the shortage of rebound damping that flawed last year's suspension. Both the air front fork and the damping-adjustable shock (set on position No. 2) were able to soak up the punishment of normal trail riding with remarkable effectiveness, yet it took some hard charging on a motocross course to get either end to bottom harshly. Putting a higher level of oil in the fork and installing the optional stiffer shock spring would, however, all but eliminate bottoming even on the toughest motocross track.

Still, the XR *is* a four-stroke, meaning that it's heavy, slow and not particularly agile compared to two-strokes, and in fact, it's not a whole lot different compared to the only other four-stroke in its class. Nevertheless, it is in the hunt, power-wise, with that TT250, which has the advantage of being lighter (and also lower, but the disadvantage of not having anywhere *near* the suspension quality of the XR). And the XR's power is doled-out in the linear, electric-motor fashion typical of Honda four-stroke singles. There's never an abundance of power anywhere along the way,

but there's never a shortage of torque, either. So instead of barrelling to the top of a hill in a spectacular roost like on a two-stroke, the Honda nonchalantly moseys up at a slower, steadier rate and with the no-need-to-shift tractability that has endeared four-strokes to riders of a less hyperactive nature.

Actually, the quantity (approximately 10 inches) of aforementioned high-quality suspension brings along with it a high center of gravity that is a detriment to steering and maneuverability. That's why the XR—which is a tad porky for a 250 because it shares so much with the XR500R—gets to feeling ponderous when you're doing some serious zig-zag trailwork. And the engineers didn't help matters much when they positioned the handlebar a bit too high and far forward for optimum rider control. The steering geometry feels quick and very sensitive, as well, so the XR sometimes requires close attention to keep it going precisely where you want.

Despite any of its shortcomings though, the XR250R is almost impossible to dislike. It's so friendly and doggedly determined to get you where you're going that it's hard to really get mad at it; and the suspension is so good that you may want to buy an XR just to enjoy it. The bike is definitely not what anyone would ever call a powerhouse, but it *is* the best overall four-stroke in its class. And if you're tempted to make jokes because there are only two contenders in that class, ask yourself one final question: What has there ever been that is better? —*Ron Lawson*



HONDA XR250R

Importer: American Honda Motor Company
100 West Alondra Boulevard
Gardena, California 90247

Category	enduro
Suggested retail price	$1848
Engine type	four-stroke vertical single
Valve arrangement	single overhead camshaft, four valves per cylinder
Bore and stroke	74.0mm x 57.8mm
Displacement	248.6cc
Compression ratio	10.0:1
Carburetion	one 30.5mm Keihin slide/needle
Gearbox	5-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	air-spring, 37mm stanchion tube diameter/9.5 in. (241mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	Pro-Link, 4-way adjustable rebound damping, 10mm spring preload adjustment/10.5 in. (267mm)
Wheelbase	56.0 to 57.3 in. (1422 to 1455mm)
Seat height	36.0 in. (914mm)
Weight	274 lbs. (124kg)
Warranty	90 days
Available color	red only

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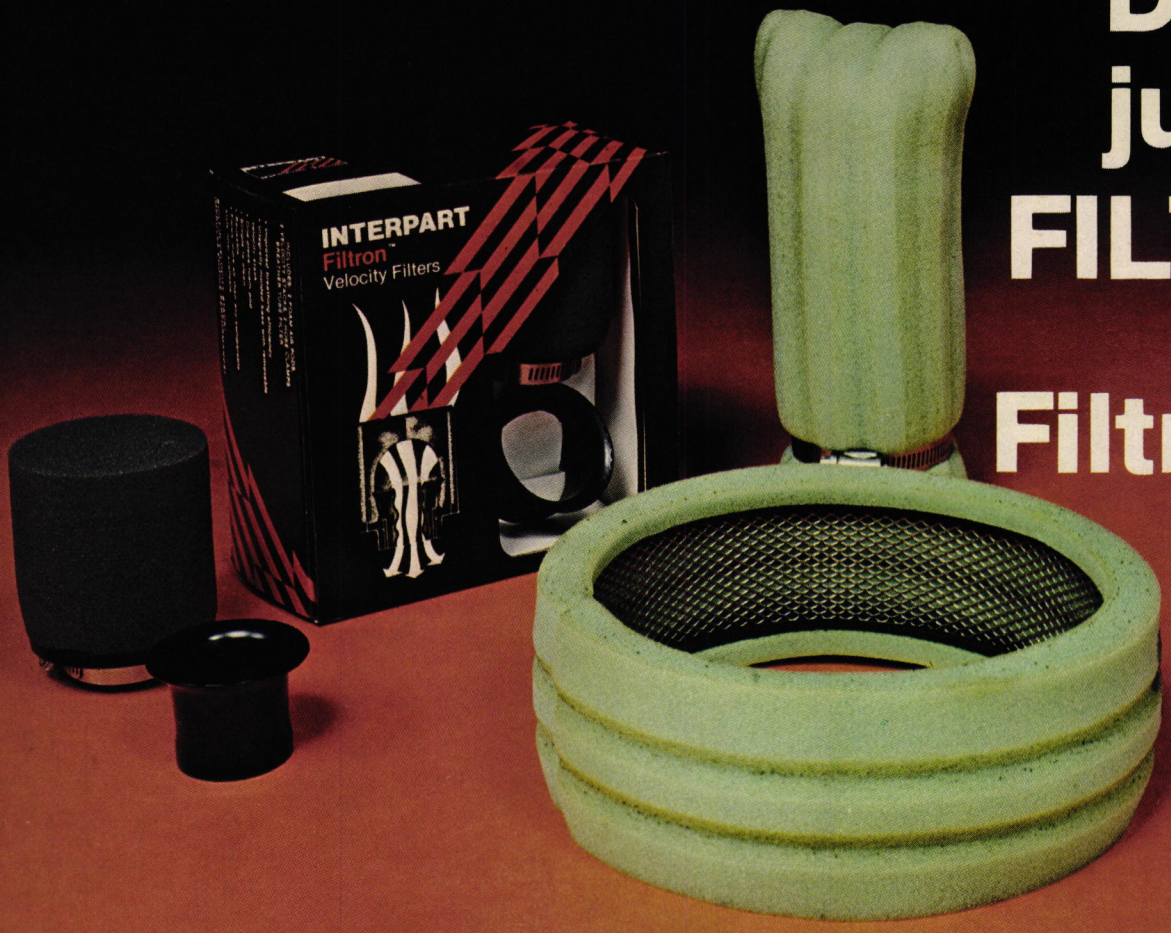

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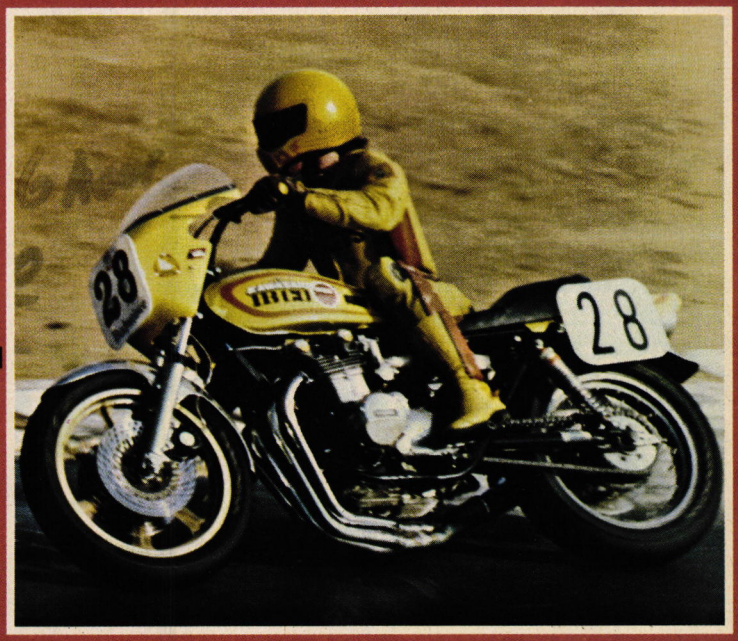

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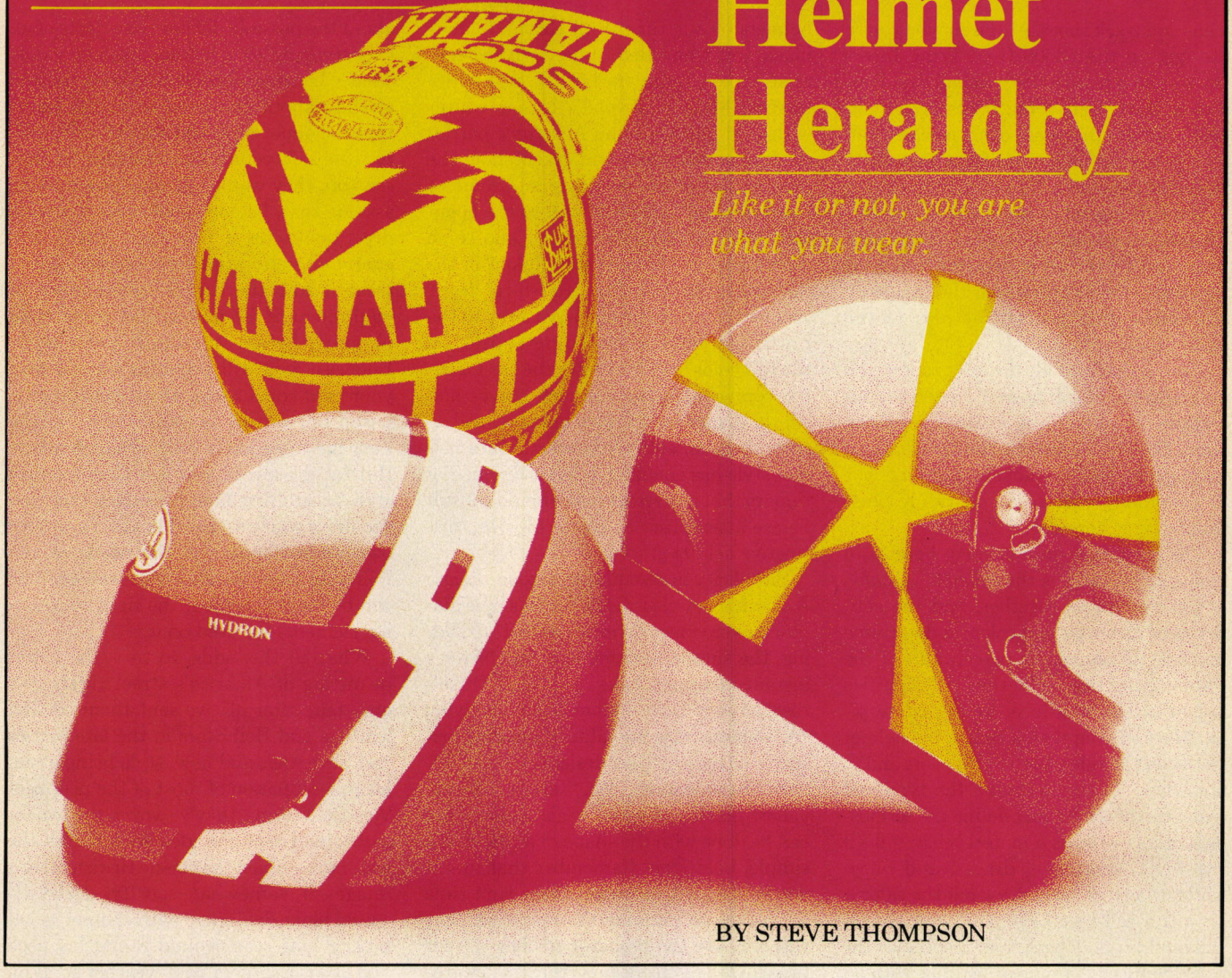
FALLING FASHIONS:

Helmet Heraldry

Like it or not, you are what you wear.



BY STEVE THOMPSON

There are two, and only two, problems to be faced in dressing yourself to ride your bike. The first is function; the second is form. Functionally, things are clear: Match the kind of riding you do to the protective clothing you can find, then buy as much protection as you can afford.

Form, however, presents the real problem. Because even if you're in that small percentage of American riders who actually are willing to consider rationally the hard realities of street riding and what those realities mean to the way you should suit up, chances are you'll spend a lot of time not quite satisfied with the kind of suit you build out of stacks of catalogs and blocks of showrooms.

Good. You should feel unsatisfied, because then you can approach the form problem with some understanding of its importance. And the first thing to understand is that, in many ways, what you look like on your bike is as important as how well what you're wearing *works*.

This is so not because the ability of your leather jacket to save your skin isn't vital—it is, obviously—but because with any luck you spend a lot more time *not* falling down than sliding along the pavement. In fact, you spend almost all your time on a bike riding through a rolling river of four-six- and eighteen-wheeled boxes, or down asphalt trails bordered by unwheeled types. The folks on the trails and the folks in the boxes share one thing in common where you're concerned: They look at you because you stand out.

You can't change your stand-out status. It's been tried, by scores of ad agencies, each of which thought that the way to sell more bikes was to convince Joe Average that a motorcycle was just like a car. As you know, it isn't. Opting for a bike in these austerity-crazed days of econobox cars *can* mean a kind of passive acceptance by some people ("Motorbikes? Oh–they *are* awfully economical, after all, aren't they?"), but as you slide by, you still stand out. Hence the powerful importance of form. Every motorcyclist is an envoy for the genre.

In times past, you were regaled by magazine editors and m/c club officers to try to achieve respectability by looking as much like the onlookers as possible. This was the forelock-tug approach to looking right, the "Yes, we ride but, gosh, we're just like you" method. It didn't work then and it won't work now. A motorcyclist is not like a nonmotorcyclist; he has chosen to do something that will never quite be understood by the nonrider, so trying to pretend otherwise is just a penalty.

There is a Right Way here, though; one that melds form and function and makes you an object of admiration rather than of unease. And the formula simple: Look as good as your bike.

Today we are mounted on machinery most of us couldn't even imagine a few years ago, capable of feats to stun the most jaded. And, to their credit, the manufacturers building this hardware have, with a few exceptions, styled and painted and polished it so that, as hardware, it is eye-catching and eyepleasing to almost everyone. And then *you* get on it.

Freeze your ride to work today; take a snapshot of yourself *en route*. Are you the kid on the Daytona Special? Let's see: no helmet, down vest over tee-shirt, torn

Continued

jeans and track shoes. Ah. Or maybe you're the guy on the $6500 Gold Wing Interstate—the guy with the baseball cap, Pendleton shirt, Red Wing boots bought in 1968 and another pair of torn jeans (oh, sorry—not actually torn, just tastefully frayed at the cuffs). Ah again.

You ride machines upon which you lavish daily attention, bikes polished to a high luster just for the joy of knowing how good they look, then you tarnish the image by not considering yourself as part of the package. Nice.

Take a tip from all the best racers you ever heard of or will hear of. Listen to generations of no-kidding knights from the Glory Days of feudalism: You are what you wear, gents. Not to yourselves, maybe, but to everybody who sees you riding. Just think of it as heraldry.

The most important element here, as in racing or jousting, is the helmet. Visually, it ties everything together, and the subtleties of its shape and coloring determine much of an onlooker's perceptions of the whole ensemble, whether it signifies knight-errant, roadracer or Interstate pilot. More so even than a jacket, the helmet identifies the rider, both to his peers and to nonriders. To the in-group, the type and cosmetics of the helmet define the seriousness of its owner as a motorcyclist; if it's a five-buck, scratched, dinged and once-white drugstore special, even if the rider is aboard a full-race CB1100R, cognoscenti will tend to notch back their respect for the rider. Similarly, a moped peddler with an Angel Nieto-clone Bell Star is apt to cause momentary vertigo in the bias-control centers of most enthusiasts. That's the power of a helmet.

As the most direct inheritors of the spirit of the knights, racers were the first to embrace helmets as heraldry, but it wasn't until the Fifties that serious attention was paid to the lid's look. Primarily because of the drab look of the material out of which porridge pots then were poured, cast or stamped, European riders began to identify themselves with personal graphics. This helped crowds at Grand Prix races identify their heroes (everyone, but *everyone*, wore black leathers then, recall), and then street riders savvy enough to wear helmets began picking up elements of their hero's heraldry for their own use. Until that time—say, by 1955—most graphics seen on helmets had been of the bike-logo type. By 1960, European racetracks were awash with glittering bikes ridden by black-clad forms almost all of whom wore their own colors on their helmets.

From this era—or at least its style—come some of the most famous riders and helmets of our time. Phil Read's famous black-and-white hemisphere with checkered tape around its border and white flashes; Mike Hailwood's classic white-with-gold and Giacomo Agostini's patriotic Italian red-white-and-green show the possibilities of the porridge-pot. Some of these designs transfered well to the open-face Bell 500TX-style helmet, and some didn't, just as the next step, taken in the Seventies, to the Star full-face "egg" strained some of the older patterns to the breaking point. Racers who grew up during the full-color Seventies have the least trouble coping with the complex curves and subtle shapes on the new helmets, and so from them an entirely new lexicon of helmet style has emerged. It's this design dictionary that any street rider should consult before attempting to create his own, distinctive helmet graphics.

Simplicity is essential to a good design. A classic example is Gary Nixon's blue diamond over white. As much as feet-up sliding, the simple, striking star was Nixon's instant identifier. Likewise, Geoff Duke's rose, or even Dave Aldana's famous flying "A" demonstrate the value of avoiding too-subtle or too-complex designs.

Boldness counts, too. Kenny Roberts' yellow-black-and-white eagle shows what can be done with the shape of a Star and a simple, bold idea. Remember that unless you're stopped in traffic, there isn't time for people to examine the minutiae; they will only see the broadest strokes of your brush. Unlike racers, however, you are free from one cluttering factor—advertising. You have no need to paint anybody's slogan or logo on your helmet, even that of the helmet manufacturer. You can start with a clean concept and ride with it that way.

The cleanest of concepts is, of course, a solid color, applied by the helmet manufacturer. Some racers and more than a few street riders leave their helmets unadorned and factory-painted because they figure that all the style in the world won't stop the damage of an impact, and in that, they're correct. This is the why-bother, all-function formulation, and, given the nice paint job applied by all the good helmet builders, nothing much is lost by it. Yet these same riders often spend untold amounts of time and money personalizing their machinery, which is subject to the same potentially devastating effects of a crash as the helmet. Thus the logic doesn't hold up; laziness, aversion to spray paint or sandpaper, or lack of imagination all might account for a valid reason not to stylize the solid-color helmet, but not the it's-just-for-crashing argument.

No mention has been made here so far about the possible deleterious effects of all this stylizing to a helmet's safety value. That's because enough has been written already about the need to match paint type to helmet type, and about "conspicuity," the safetycrat's buzzword for "if they see you, they won't kill you." We have to assume that, having spent around a hundred bucks for a first-rate, Snell- and everybody-else-approved helmet, you'd treat it like the sophisticated piece of equipment it is, and spend some time planning before you squirt paint at it. Likewise, you will probably have drawn your own conclusions about conspicuity, based not on the blandishments of the Feds but more likely your own experience. But for the record, our less-than-tolerant stylistic arbiting here presumes that you can tailor your own heraldic visions to your own understanding of the needs of visibility. In other words, even an ebony Star can be highly visible if the right contrasting elements are used on it.

What all this adds up to is the Europeanizing of America's street riders. It's only fair, after all; we sent them colored leathers and Bell Stars in the late Sixties and Seventies, and now, style being a major preoccupation of most of the people of Western Europe, they've woven the two together and sent the idea back across the water to us. Even the classic British biker's image—a somewhat scruffy, Belstaff-suited bloke, bedecked with enamel jacket pins, a long scarf wound round his neck and Lewis Leathers' cold-weather boots on his wooly-stocking-clad feet—is being replaced by the color-coordinated look generated by the French and the Germans.

Our classic American style—bomber jacket and Levi's, with a helmet painted the same color as the gas tank—looks stodgy and unexciting in comparison, and so it's no wonder that you see more and more superbike riders in this country exercising care and taste in building their distinctive riding kits. Our native American conservatism in the matter of what constitutes proper riding gear is slowly being eroded by new ideas and new materials from Europe, and it's certain that we can do better for style than either leaving our helmets in stock trim or matching them to our sidecovers. We at CYCLE GUIDE are so certain of it that we're launching a contest to prove it, but there is always the chance that we're wrong. We think you guys are wearing baseball caps when you ride your Gold Wings simply because you haven't really thought about it much. But, of course, you might actually *be* the styleless clods with no regard for your own safety that most non-riders think you are. •

BLUFF-CALLING:
CYCLE GUIDE'S Design-Your-Own-Helmet Contest

A chance to put your paint can where our mouth is.

• We know that our approach to *your* taste and style is bound to infuriate you. So we're ready for your outrage. But before you take pen in hand to dispute our ideas about helmet heraldry, take a deep breath and read on.

See, we're ready to listen to your side of the story. No, better than that, we're ready to *look* at it. And we'll give you the chance to put your notions about helmet style into reality, too. All you have to do is enter CYCLE GUIDE'S Design-Your-Own-Helmet Contest. Here's how:

The idea is for you to show us—either with illustrations or photographs—how you would personalize any given helmet so that it best depicts your style, class, skill and whatever other attributes you'll own up to. Heraldry, in other words. Any kind of design is okay—it's your head, after all, not ours—but there are some requirements for how you show it to us for judging.

First, you have to show us all three views of your design scheme: side, front and rear. To that end, we've included, for your convenience, five sets of outline drawings that accurately depict five different popular helmets: an Arai RX-7, a Star 81, a Shoei ZG and a Simpson RXM-1—all full-face models—plus an open-face Fury 300. If your favorite lid not among these five, you can, of course, make up your own outline drawings of the helmet of your choice and use them for your entry. But if you do decide to use your own drawings, they must be exact depictions of the helmet in question, otherwise we won't be able to judge them properly.

Second, we expect you to use quality materials—color markers, pencils, felt-tips, pastels or whatever. We want to make sure we understand what your vision is, and if you send us something scrawled with a Number Two pencil that says "blue" instead of actually filling in the shade of blue you have in mind, you'll prejudice the contest—and not in your favor.

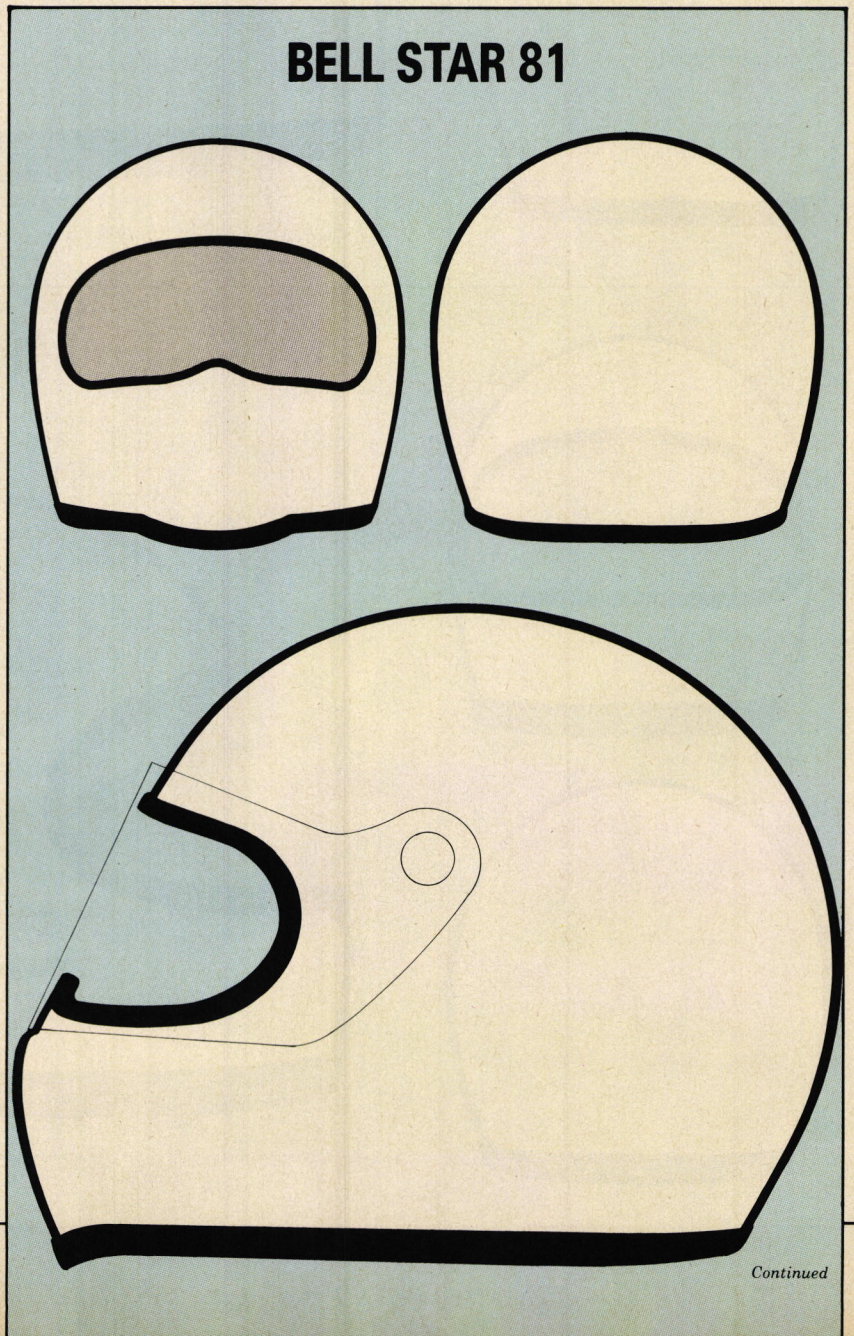
Third, blatant copies of current designs will be thrown into the scrapheap. So will entries that specify helmets whose manufacturers have recommended that they *not* be painted. Applying any kind of paint or tape to helmets of this type is an unsafe practice that we cannot condone, since it could cause a chemical alteration of the outer shell of the helmet. So check the inside of the helmet you've chosen to personalize and even look in the literature that comes with it for don't-paint-me warnings. If you find any, *heed* them.

Fourth, if you've already built your dream helmet, we'll accept color slides of the same views—front, side and rear—and treat your entry just like the others. But we can't do it with bad photos.

We'll judge all the entries, which have to be in our hands by February 1, 1982. Mail all entries to: CYCLE GUIDE'S Design-Your-Own-Helmet Contest, 20914 Higgins Court, Torrance, California 90501. Our decisions will be final.

Oh—the goodies, of course. What your design will get you, if it's one of the top five chosen, is the exact helmet you specified (don't forget to tell us the name of the helmet, its full model designation and your helmet size), painted precisely the way it was on your entry (which is why we won't accept entries that specify non-paintable helmets). We'll have a professional painter put together your design on your helmet, and the winners will be shown in an upcoming issue. So what you get for your efforts—if you're in the top five when the flag drops—is nothing less than fame and a brand-new helmet. There are no catches. This contest is open to all ages, licensed to ride or not; all you need in order to win are taste and style.

—Steve Thompson



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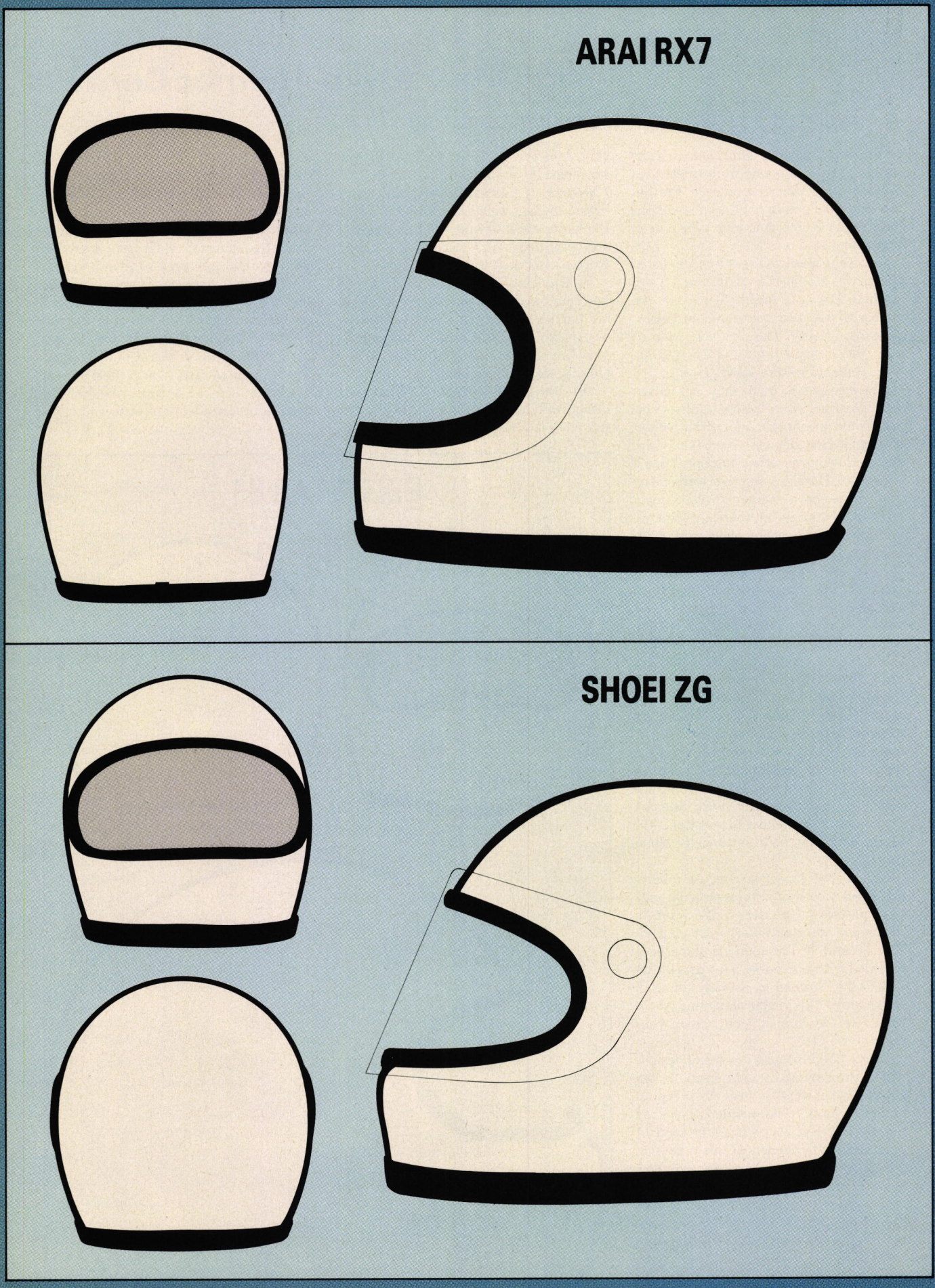
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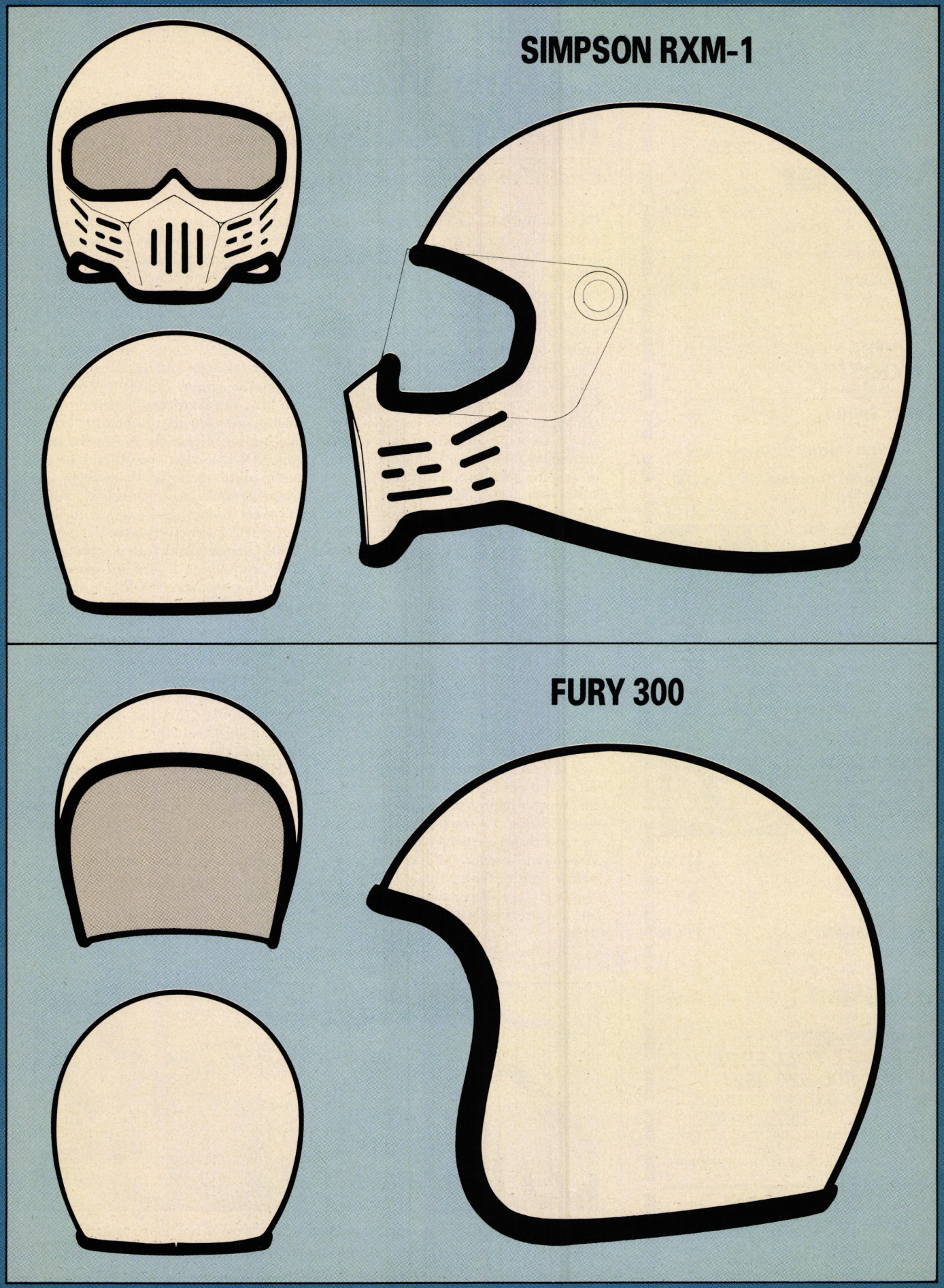
SHOEI ZG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HAVO Integral 11 Helmet Black only.	$98.95	$71.95
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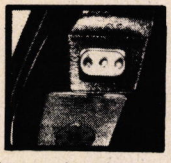

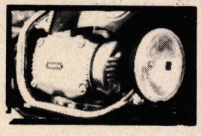

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PRODUCT EVALUATION:

Castre Warrior MX/Enduro Gloves

Castre's welterweight contender.

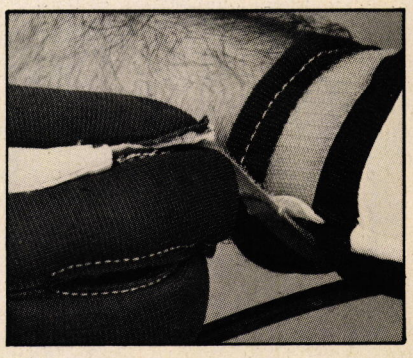
• Castre Warriors are billed as dual-purpose MX/Enduro gloves, but they were actually designed with one thing in mind: The Trail. You know The Trail, it starts in the canyon, winds through the hills and drops you God-knows-where, totally exhausted with a set of brutally rock-and-branch-battered fingers. The people at Castre have been on The Trail. They, like you, have been swatted across the knuckles by out-cropping limbs and, in that temporary moment of irrationality that always accompanies sudden pain, cursed themselves for not wearing boxing gloves, or something with similar protection.

Warriors don't quite qualify as boxing gloves, but they're as close as you can get in trail-riding protection. Padding is the key feature with the Castres. Most gloves simply have a strip of leather or rubber sewn across the knuckles and down each finger, but the padding on the Warriors is sewn inside the glove. Two layers of Ethafoam, a lightweight material used to cushion hockey gloves, are sandwiched between snag-resistant nylon skin to protect the backside of the hand and fingers. This gives the glove a bulky appearance, but joints placed at strategic locations and a unique shape are used to combat the lack of mobility caused by the padding. All Castre gloves feature a natural curve that roughly approximates the three compound curves of a relaxed hand. The underlying theory is that with heavy gloves your hand fatigues early due, in small part, to fighting the flat shape of the glove. A curved glove shaped like a hand should put less stress on the rider, as well as on itself.

Other features show equal attention to detail. At the base of the glove is a built-in terrycloth wristband to absorb sweat. And a velcro fastener is used instead of the usual elastic band to secure the glove on your hand. But though the velcro doesn't wear out as quickly as elastic, at times it can be annoying. Fastening it is just an extra bother. And when left undone the glove fits sloppily and the dangling strip becomes an irritant. But the biggest problem with the Warriors stems from their greatest asset: Having the most protection comes at the price of also having the most bulk. It's true that the Warriors have much more mobility than their appearance would have you believe, but it still takes a long time to adjust to their clumsy feel. For motocross use the heavily padded fingers tend to catch on the front brake and clutch levers. In less hectic trail-riding situations the extra bulk is not a problem if you move your fingers carefully.

A second disadvantage of the padding is apparent on warm days. The gloves are hot. Again, this is not as bad a problem as the Warriors' bulk would suggest. Your hands don't fry, they just simmer slowly as air finds its way through the layers of thick material.

These disadvantages simply reflect the different priorities of motocross and trail riding. If you're heading out to the MX track where mobility comes first, then there are lots of other gloves for you to choose from. But if you are going to ride The Trail you need the ultimate in protection. And that is exactly what the Warriors are. Retail price is $29.95. Write Castre, Inc., Dept. CG, 836 Flory Mill Rd., Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17601. —*Ron Lawson*



The warriors enter the ring with full padding, a natural curve and heavy weight

Protection is the right hook to catch the trail-riding market.

Cycle Guide's

SPECIAL EDITION

ANTI-THEFT

Locks • Chains • Pagers • Alarms

Every device made to keep your bike yours, from the manufacturer that made it to how and where to buy it.

© 1981 MARK VAGNER

Anti-theft devices are the ounce of prevention negating the need for a pound of cure. And the disease has reached plague proportions. Current motorcycle theft rates exceed registration rates of just a few years ago—there are more bikes being stolen now than were being sold in the mid-Seventies. That's a fairly serious concern; we all know some potential owners will look for a bargain price, but this is ridiculous. If you leave one of the more commonly stolen bikes parked in certain sections of certain locales, its lifespan on the street can probably be measured in mere minutes.

Continued

SPECIAL EDITION: ANTI-THEFT DEVICES

Having your bike stolen is infuriating, no doubt about it. And the long, dark walk home is just the beginning. It's bad enough that theft insurance is either impossible to get or terribly expensive to buy; but getting the insurance company to pay off can be difficult. And when you consider the cumulative effects of depreciation and inflation, your loss adds up. The result will likely not be an exact replacement of what you once had in your garage, but something considerably less. In our astute judgement, it's far better if your bike just isn't ripped-off in the first place.

Ergo, anti-theft devices. Obviously, they can take many forms, from having one of the group remain outside with the bikes while the rest go inside for burgers and fries; using your basic chain and lock; wiring a bomb into the ignition so the thief at least goes up in smoke with the bike; or having a hungry wolverine as your riding companion. To someone who has had a bike stolen, some of the more bizarre possibilities might have a certain justifiable appeal. But for most of us, the choice is between various devices that can be attached to the motorcycle and that will somehow discourage the bad guys.

Here are some of the major categories:

Something to attach your bike to a stationary object. This is your elemental chain-and-lock grouping, although many of them are much more sophisticated than that. You secure the bike to a tree, post, fence, house or bunch of other bikes—anything to make it difficult for the bike to be moved. These will take many forms—chains, cables, bars, special locks. Whatever you choose, make sure it fits your bike. It's best to secure it through a major section of the motorcycle, such as the frame, or you might return to find only your front wheel securely fastened to the oak tree. And attach it to something that itself won't be easily moved.

Wheel-stoppers. These attach to a wheel or brake assembly to prevent rotation. The bike can still be lifted and therefore moved, but as long as the wheel-stopper is hooked up, it won't roll. Wheel-stoppers seem to better suited to heavy than lightweight bikes.

Noisemakers. Various horns, beepers, sirens, tooters, hooters and whistles typically are tied into the ignition to go off when someone else starts or moves the bike without first deactivating the alarm. The idea is that the noise draws a crowd, or The Law, or you; and since the thief understands this, he leaves —without your bike. Somehow, working on a bike with a screwdriver and pair of pliers when it's screeching and honking away appears suspicious.

Pagers. These also fall onto the list of electronic devices that are tied into the ignition; when the bike is started or moved or tipped over, the alarm goes off and signals you by a pager. You can then rush out of the store and grab the guy before he grabs your bike. Or confront the group of thieves *as* they grab your bike.

Ignition-interrupters. These provide a means of deactivating the ignition, typically by a hidden switch or lock. Done properly, they stop even hotwiring attempts. If someone steals the bike, he at least won't ride it away.

As far as we know, all these methods and devices will do exactly what they are intended to do—which will not necessarily prevent your bike from being stolen. In other words, all of these items will work and all of them can be defeated by someone with enough skill, experience and patience. That means none of them can prevent your bike from being stolen. Some points to consider:

Wheel-stoppers only prevent the bike from being rolled; it can still be lifted into the back of a truck, or the thief might bring along tools capable of dismantling or destroying the device altogether.

Securing your bike to a stationary object is pretty straightforward, but again, proper tools and patience can turn anti-theft and your ownership into history.

Noisemakers will create a lot of ruckus but there's no guarantee that they will deter a thief cool enough to stand there and calmly go to work on your motorcycle as if he's the owner himself.

Pagers will alert you that *something* is happening but not whether it's an attempted theft or just someone rocking the boat. And if you're too far away to get there in time, all you'll suspect is that there's a crime in progress.

Ignition-interrupters will keep the bike from running, but certainly not from being moved—by truck to the thief's garage, perhaps?—where the interrupter can be defeated in the peace and quiet of more secure surroundings.

Anti-theft devices, then, will not prevent theft but might discourage the casual thief. Probably, most motorcycle theft isn't the result of professionals but of guys who have their eyes on your bike and just don't want to strike a deal equitable to both sides. In these cases, most anti-theft devices will probably serve their intended purposes. They can prolong your ownership but they cannot guarantee it. What a man can make, a man can break; so just don't expect miracles from metal.

There are other options. If you're handy with tools, you might fabricate a hidden fuel line shutoff; a thief might get away but he wouldn't get far. Or you could design your own circuitry to kill the ignition until you switch it back on. For most applications, though, we think something from the marketplace is probably best. All the design, testing and manufacturing have already been done, and all you have to do is decide what you want, buy it and install it. Only a select few can devise something that's better than what they can buy.

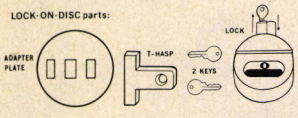
In deciding to buy, you don't have to fly blind. Think about what type of device would work best for you and your bike. Ask yourself the obvious questions: If you install a wheel-stopper, is your bike big enough that it won't be carried away? If you choose to chain it to something, will there be something to chain it to in the places you normally park? If a noisemaker is your choice, do you leave your bike in a spot where noise will be a deterrent? Will you always be close enough for a pager to contact you in time? And if so, you are physically and mentally prepared for the likely confrontation that will follow? Is your bike imposing enough that having the ignition inoperative will stall the potential thief? Match the deterrent to the bike, where you commonly leave it and what kind of protection you think will work best in those circumstances. If you've got a kennel of Dobermans to park the bike in, fine.

Once you're all locked up, here's one tip for the road: Don't forget to unlock your bike before riding off, or you might go a very short distance with only part of your motorcycle. We have heard of shocks torn off swingarms and spokes ripped out of wheels like so much spaghetti.

Protection, in the end, is what you do on your own; you're the only one who can provide it. After the bike is stolen, the police *might* help you find it. Its condition *might* approximate the bike you knew before it was lifted. And even after it's stolen, you can be haunted by the incident. The insurance *might* pay enough to replace it. Or you *might* end up with some smaller portion of your bike's full replacement value. Good luck. But the only real protection you can have against your bike being stolen in the first place is the self-insurance of your own police action in doing all you can to prevent the theft. You're not interested in removing temptation and saving sinners from the devil, you're only interested in saving your bike from sinners and yourself from a lot of grief. If one of these anti-theft devices will do that, no matter what the price, it's been a steal. ●

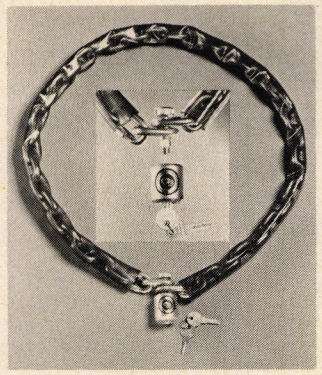
American Lock Company
3400 West Exchange Road
Crete, Illinois 60417
(312) 534-2000

American lays claim to having been the first to conceive and produce the round case padlock—more than 50 years ago. This design prevents hammer blows from solidly striking the case because of the curvature, thereby changing the impact into a glancing blow. The new series 700 padlock features a solid hardened steel circular case measuring $2^1/_2$ inches wide, a solid steel hardened cylinder cover plate, a full $^7/_{16}$-inch-diameter hardened alloy steel shackle, heel and toe double locking with hardened steel ball bearings and a cylinder designed with pins shaped to prevent picking. The series 700 has a $1^1/_{16}$-inch shackle clearance, and the 701 has a 2-inch clearance. Both are finished in bright chrome and they sell for $18.95 and $19.95, respectively.



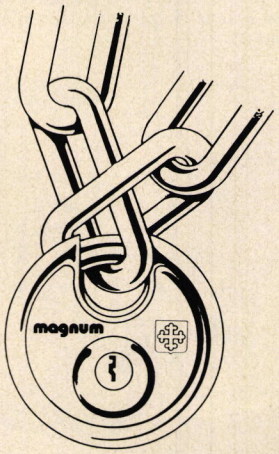
Anglers Manufacturing Corp.
7729 North Eastlake Terrace
Chicago, Illinois 60626
(312) 761-2811

Anglers' Lock-On-Disc is a compact locking device designed to restrict brake disc and, hence, wheel movement. Its T-shaped hasp extends through the cast alloy disc carrier or cast-in ports and into the locking device. Its placement makes it extremely difficult to attempt cutting. This lock will work on most Japanese, Italian and American bikes. It will not fit BMW, Norton, Triumph or '81 Kawasakis from 550cc on up. It comes with two keys, a hardened T-hasp and an adaptor plate that allows the lock to fit on discs that have holes around the inner portion of the brake disc. The Lock-On-Disc sells for $32.95, suggested retail.



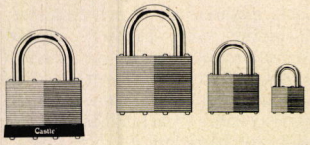
Campbell Chain Division
McGraw-Edison Company
3990 East Market Street
P.O. Box 3056
York, Pennsylvania 17402
(717) 755-2921

Motorcycle/Moped Pack includes four feet of $^5/_{16}$-inch case-hardened, boron-bearing, vinyl-sleeved alloy chain that's designed to resist saws and cutters, and a cylindrical lock to protect the shackle from boltcutters. The combination sells for $26.95 or you can purchase the lock alone for $10.05.

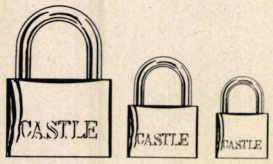


Castle Hardware
Company Inc.
701 S. Raymond Avenue
Alhambra, California 91803
(213) 282-4144

Castle's most popular motorcycle lock is the Magnum padlock. It features a stainless steel case, a 4-pin tumbler cylinder and a $^3/_8$-inch-diameter shackle. This padlock, product number 90800, has a suggested retail price of $10.95. As companion to the Magnum, the number 40700 black vinyl-coated, case-hardened steel chain is shown with it. The chain is also $^3/_8$-inch in diameter and it sells for $19.45.

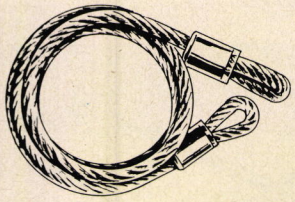


Castle's steel laminated padlocks feature solid brass cylinders with stainless steel springs and use Master Lock Co. key blanks for easy duplication. Their cases come as large as $2^1/_2$ inches wide and sell for between $4.65 and $6.65, depending on size.

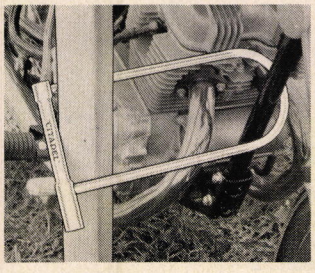


Solid brass padlocks with solid brass key cylinders are also available from Castle in case sizes up to 2 inches wide and sell for between $2.69 and $3.49.

Castle's selection of cables includes this vinyl-coated solid-steel cable. The coiled cable, measuring $^5/_{16}$-inch outside diameter, sells for $7.60.

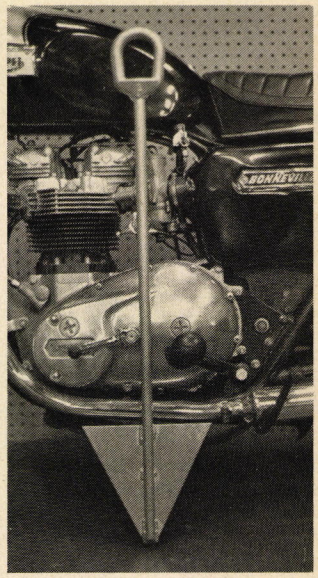


Many combinations of blue and black vinyl-sheathed security chains, chain-and-lock or cable-and-lock sets are also available from Castle. The company's products are too extensive to illustrate here, so we suggest that you write or call for its catalog.



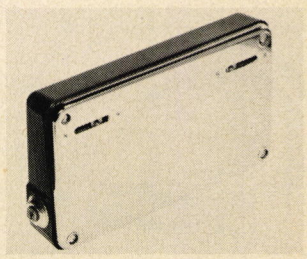
Citadel Locks
Bike Security Systems
177 Tosca Drive
Stoughton,
Massachusetts 02072
(617) 344-1352

The Citadel is constructed of a through-hardened steel alloy designed to stop attacks from boltcutters, hacksaws, cablecutters and other tools used by bike thieves. Features include a 7-pin round-key cylinder and a "$250 Guarantee Against Theft." It states that "if your bike is stolen because of the failure of the Citadel to prevent the theft, Bike Security Systems will pay you $250.00 on your theft deductible up to this limit." The Citadel weighs 3.1 pounds and has a shackle measuring $14^1/_2$ inches x $5^1/_2$ inches. It sells for a suggested $49.95 with the guarantee or $42.95 without it.



Cycle Warehouse
Corporation
7 Aylesbury Road
Timonium, Maryland 21903
(301) 252-6380

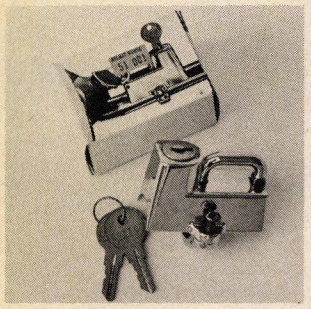
The Bike Spike from Cycle Warehouse offers a simple approach to bike security. The Spike measures 33 inches by $8^3/_4$ inches and features a $^3/_4$-inch-thick, drop-forged, heat-treated "eye" and main assembly. It can be driven through dirt or asphalt with a large sledgehammer or buried in concrete to provide a securing anchor for locking. Each is sold with a lifetime money-back guarantee of satisfaction. It sells for $19.95 per unit plus $2.50 U.P.S. charges. Two units are shipped free.



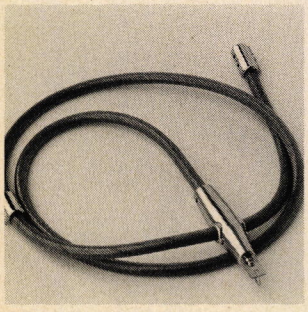
Dualock
211 B South Whisman Road
Mountain View,
California 94041

(415) 969-3627
Dualock's number 200 Dualarm is a solid-state audio alarm featuring a motion sensor that adjusts to most parking positions. Features include weatherproof electronics that are protected from tampering by two front-cover interlock switches. The unit is encased in lightweight, durable ABS plastic with a polished and chrome-plated front cover. The degree of motion sensitivity can be adjusted. Suggested retail price is $49.95.

The Green Company
2217 West Burbank Blvd.
Box 6094
Burbank, California 91510
(213) 849-6271
The Green Company distributes this 6-foot, coiled, non-coated steel cable and brass padlock combination that retails for $7.95.

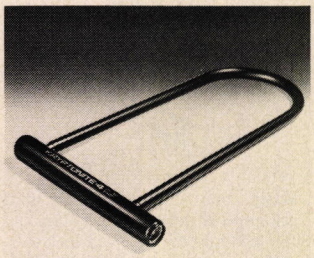


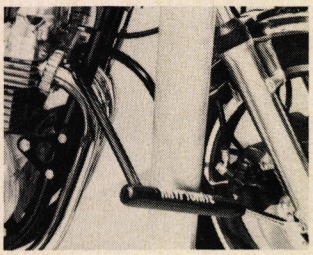
Helmet House
2115 Colorado Avenue
Santa Monica,
California 90404
(213) 828-6405
Helmet House distributes this compact Garvin helmet lock that attaches to the handlebar with two "tamper proof" one-way screws and comes with two keys. The lock fits all cycles, with the exception of Harley-Davidsons, and sells for $6.49.



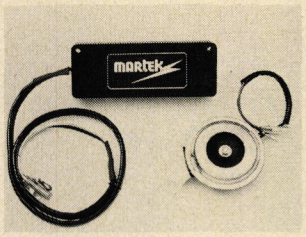
The Adjust-O Cable Lock from the Fort Lock Corporation is also distributed by Helmet House. It's designed to lock in lengths of 5, 6 or 7 feet by using clamped-on locking stations. Cable material is 5/8-inch-diameter (including vinyl coating), multi-strand, aircraft grade, galvanized steel with a pull strength of over 10 tons. Lock assembly combines a tubular-type key with a 7-pin tumbler cylinder, steel case, brass internal mechanism, polished chrome finish and two nickel-plated keys. There are more than 100,000 possible key codes. Suggested retail price is $59.95.

Helmet House sells this Uni-Stop Fork Lock as the Bolster Lock. It slips around your bike's fork sliders and through the spokes to prevent the machine from being rolled away. Lock mechanism is held in place by a steel expansion pin that resists tampering. Entire locking loop is vinyl coated to prevent scratching. Suggested retail is $25.95.

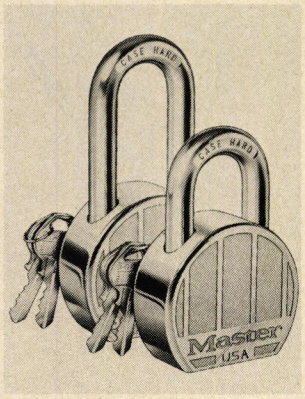




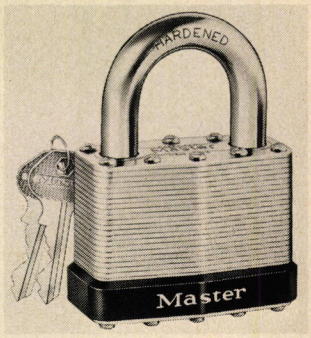
Kryptonite Bike Lock Corp.
95 Freeport Street
Boston, Massachusetts
02122
(617) 265-4800
Kryptonite K-4 locks are constructed of fully hardened, aircraft-quality alloy steel and are designed to be impervious to boltcutters, hacksaws, freon and other devices used by thieves. The locks are vinyl coated to prevent scratching and their mechanism is the ACE tubular type, which is machined out of brass, as opposed to being die-cast. The largest lock, intended for full-sized motorcycles, measures 5 x 15 inches and sells for $48.95. Smaller sizes for minis and mopeds are the K-4 WB, which measures 5 x 14 inches and costs $39.95, and the K-4 LS, which measures 4 x 11 1/2 inches and goes for $35.95. All Kryptonite K-4 locks now carry a $250 Guarantee Against Theft program. In the event a vehicle is stolen while properly secured with a Kryptonite lock and the lock owner has complied with the requirements of the policy, the firm will pay the lock owner up to $250.



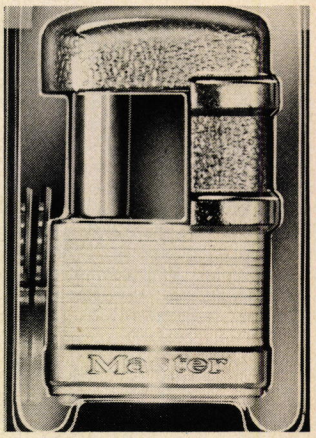
Martek Products, Inc.
3609 West Mac Arthur Blvd.
Santa Ana, California 92704
(714) 751-7901
Martek's Mongoose audio alarm consists of a solid-state sonic transducer (microphone) and two chambers, each containing a steel ball a half inch in diameter. One chamber is sensitive to the accelerated motion of the bike. The other portion is sensitive to the tilt of the bike—for instance, when the bike is moved off the side- or center stand. The microphone picks up the noises generated by the moving balls and this signal is electronically amplified. The microphone also picks up sounds transmitted through the frame of the bike, such as those generated by tools or tampering. The alarm module is made from a tough ABS polymer and is designed to be unaffected by normal motorcycle vibrations. The alarm adapts to any motorcycle equipped with a 12-volt negative-ground electrical system. Suggested retail price is $64.95.



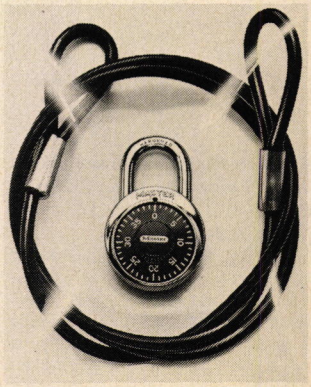
Master Lock Company
2600 North 32nd
Milwaukee,
Wisconsin 53210
(414) 444-2800
Master offers one of the widest ranges of locks and locking devices available through a single manufacturer. Most of these locks, chains, cables and combinations can be found in well-stocked hardware stores as well as in many cycle shops. Among the company's more popular locks are these series 220 and 230 solid round locks with 2- or 2 1/2-inch-wide cases. They feature half-inch-thick case-hardened alloy steel shackles, patented cylinder guards, dual-ball deadbolt locking and interchangable regular or long shackles. Prices range from $11.29 to $14.19, depending on specifications.



The company's traditional laminated locks include this series 19, which is the firm's strongest padlock. It features a 3-inch-wide steel case, double-locking deadbolt system, dual hardened steel levers that independently lock each shackle leg, a super-size case-hardened over-half-inch alloy steel shackle and a variety of keying options. Prices range from $16.99 on up to $21.79.

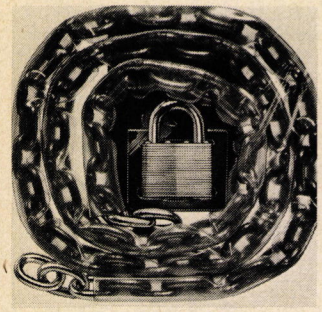


Master's high-powered answer to thieves is its new four-pin-tumbler Armorlock. The lock's revolving case-hardened steel shackle-guard is designed to resist cutting by any device. It has a 1 1/2-inch-wide case, two brass keys, and it sells for $6.49. This lock is also available as a set with either a 6-foot, 5/16-inch cable or a 4-foot, 9/32-inch welded steel chain for $12.99 and $15.99 respectively.

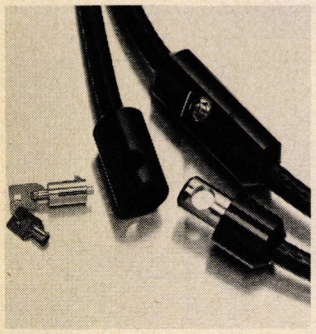


There is even a combination cable and lock designed exclusively to protect motocross bikes. It features 4 feet

of black vinyl-coated flexible steel cable, a number 1500 padlock with "motocross orange" dial, and it sells for just $6.99.



This line is so complete in chain, cable and lock sizes and combinations that we suggest you write for the latest catalog to get the full story.

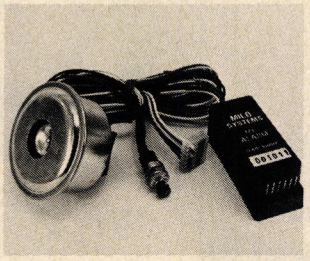


Maxim 75
Rt. 1 Schoolhouse Road
Mokena, Illinois 60448
(815) 485-0200

The Maxim 75/1 is one of the most massive cable-and-lock combinations available. It's constructed of 3/4-inch (including vinyl coating), 6-strand, high-carbon, aircraft-quality steel cable with 39 wires per strand—a total of 234 wires—resulting in a strength of 260,000 pounds per square inch. The 7-foot cable allows you to secure your bike to other motorcycles or to immovable objects. Cable is joined to locking component with an 800-ton swaged button. Lock measures 1 3/4 inches in diameter and is made of high-tensile, cold-rolled steel with a fully concealed joint and a black chrome finish. The 7-tumbler, tubular key lock has over 200,000 possible combinations to eliminate duplication of keys. Custom lengths are available upon request. Suggested retail is $49.95. A slightly smaller version, the 75/2, which has a 6-foot cable (5/8-inch-diameter including vinyl coating) and a 1 3/8-inch-diameter locking component, sells for $42.95.

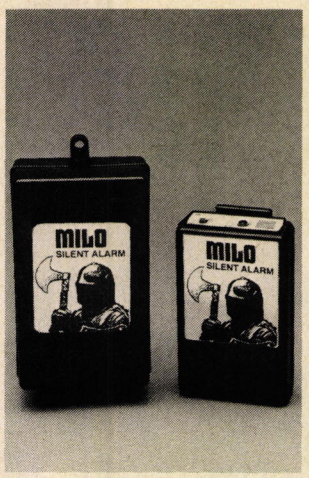
King Cobra
Micronics International, Inc.
P.O. Box 6319
Anaheim, California 92806
(714) 632-5080

King Cobra offers a solid-state alarm system that combines a 115 db audible device with a remote paging unit and auxiliary sensor kits for attaching accessories directly to the system. Details include the usual motion sensor plus a transmitter/receiver device with a range of up to one mile, and individually attached velcro-affixed wiring to protect add-on accessories such as saddlebags. The system was designed to adapt to any motorcycle that has a 12-volt negative-ground electrical system. The unit is specifically made to withstand motorcycle vibration and is weatherproof. The basic alarm sells for $69.95 and the complete system is priced at $139.95. Auxiliary sensor kits for accessories are optional.



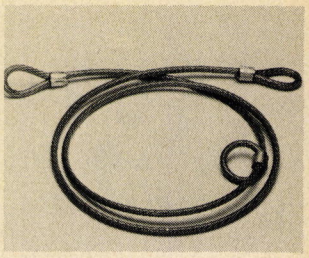
Milo Systems, Inc.
699 South State
College Blvd.
Fullerton, California 92631
(714) 738-1387

Milo offers what could be the most complete line of audio, paging and visual solid-state electronic alarm systems. The firm builds units for both 6- and 12-volt systems, negative or positive grounds, special dry cell systems for bikes with no battery, dual siren systems, relays that enable both horns (or sirens) and lights to flash simultaneously, a silent alarm and even a standby battery to supply power to the alarm if the main battery cable is cut. In addition, Milo claims it has the only radio paging alarm system (with sensors built-in) that works with or without an audible alarm. Prices range from $69.95 for the basic M1 alarm system on up to $147.95 for the M2 silent alarm plus various amounts for the option you choose.



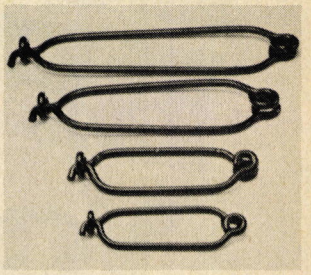
Page Alert Systems, Inc.
23900 Hawthorne
Blvd., #120
Torrance, California 90505
(213) 378-8596

Page Alert's Theft Alert 500 A-1 silent electronic theft-warning system comes with pocket pager and coded radio signal, and is easy to install. The silent alarm enables you to take action immediately—before the would-be thief suspects you have been alerted. Or you can use the paging system in conjunction with an audible alarm. The one-watt transmitter has a range of up to one mile and is small enough to be hidden under the seat of most machines. It can be powered by the bike's existing 12-volt battery or by any 12-volt power supply. The transmitter can be triggered by a mercury tilt switch, by magnetic contact or by a variety of switch designs. For maximum range, a tape-on windshield antenna can be used or the unit can be connected to a radio or CB antenna for extended range. Suggested retail price for the alarm sysem is $124.95, and the mercury tilt switch goes for $9.50. Page Alert Systems also has similar systems with longer ranges and still more conveniences for your motorcycle or auto.



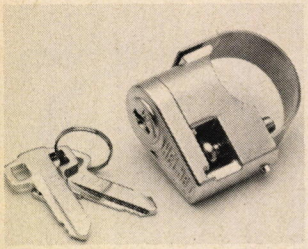
Rock Solid Products
TER Corporation
2950 De La Vina
Street, Suite 2
Santa Barbara,
California 93105
(805) 687-5345

Rock Solid offers many cable locking systems in a variety of sizes and types to fit a wide range of price and security requirements. The most popular lock for larger machines is called the Golden Grizzly; it's designed for resistance to cutting tools, using 711 brass-plated interwoven wires to produce a claimed breaking strength of over 6 tons. The patented 3-loop design allows you to lock each wheel independently around a fixed object (requiring a would-be thief to cut the cable twice). The 5/8-inch-diameter, 12-foot-long, vinyl-coated cable is surprisingly flexible and weighs in at under 5 pounds. Other lighter-weight 5/16-inch-diameter and 3/8-inch-diameter, 6- and 7-foot-length cables in both self-coiling, dual- and triple-loop designs are also available. Suggested retail prices start at $5.95 and go on up to $39.95 for the Golden Grizzly.



Rocky Cycle Company, Inc.
1250 Elko Drive
Sunnyvale, California 94086
(408) 734-3750

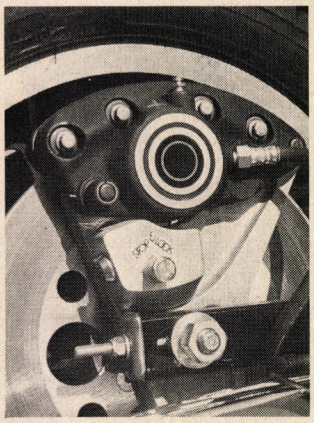
Rocky offers a range of Triangle bike locks to use in conjunction with the padlock of your choice. Each size—from 5 1/2 inches long up to 13 inches long—is made of hardened alloy steel to resist boltcutters, files and hacksaws, and is vinyl coated to prevent scratches on your machine. Prices range from $13.53 to $22.78.



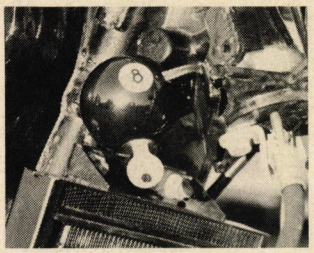
Rocky also distributes this simple helmet lock that can be mounted to any 7/8-inch handlebar or frame tube, thereby allowing a lockable attaching point for helmet D-rings. It comes with two keys and sells for $5.67.

Stop & Lock Company
411 Tamal Plaza
Corte Madera,
California 94925
(415) 924-9086

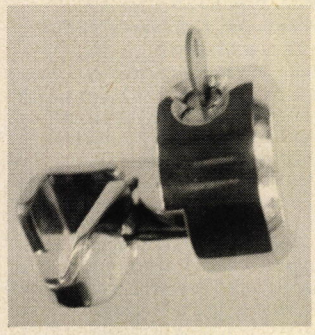
Stop & Lock Company offers a wide selection of rear-wheel locking devices that fit around the rear axle and either apply the rear brake or pass a drawbolt through holes in the stock hub or brake disc. They fit BMW, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha. Each unit works with a tube-type key, and the locking element may be removed and stored to prevent inadvertent wheel locking. All units retail for $55.00.



Stop & Lock's new H-D 10 replaces the rear brake caliper on '72 through '80 Harley-Davidsons with an integrated locking system. The unit is designed to increase the life of the rear brake and to provide a secure wheel-locking anti-theft system. The two-point-mounted caliper/lock assembly sells for $99.00 as a bolt-on kit.

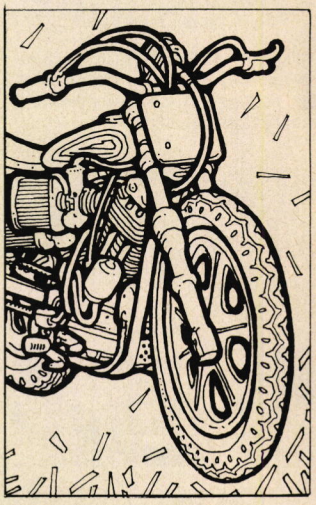


Stop & Lock's H-D 6 is a Harley-Davidson lock that's shaped like a billiard ball. It features an enclosed locking mechanism (no exposed shackle), and it locks as easily as a padlock. H-D 6 is made especially for all Harley-Davidson FX, FXE and FXES models and sells for $24.95.



Wheel Lock Inc.
1500 Adams No. 315-A
Costa Mesa,
California 92626
(714) 545-0151

The Wheel Lock Company manufactures specialty locking devices that attach either to your brake disc or rear sprocket. Each design effectively prevents the machine from rolling very far in either direction. Similar devices have successfully secured aircraft for years. Because of its design, this lock is impervious to attacks from boltcutters, hacksaws and other types of cutting tools. Either the disc or the sprocket lock retails for $49.95. Extra keys are available for $2.



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780 Elkridge Landing Road
Linthicum, MD 21090

SPORT LINES

Cycle Guide's True Tales of Race Courses, Dark Horses and Machines at Speed

EDITED BY DAIN GINGERELLI

Issues and Answers

Kidd is issued No. 1, Scott looks for answers.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 TOM RILES

• "Next year I'm going after their ass," said Gary Scott after losing the Ascot Half-Mile National and along with it the 1981 No. 1 plate. There was mock anger in the 1975 AMA Grand National champion's voice, but deep down inside you know he meant it. Scott is a scrapper—a fighter with the aggressive spirit of Tom Hearns and the cunning skill of Sugar Ray Leonard.

Scott had as good a chance at winning The Plate as did eventual winner Mike Kidd. They both went to Ascot, the final event of a

Continued

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GS-550L

Even big bike enthusiasts have to be impressed by the 1982 GS-550L. The handling is something to behold. As you can see, so is the styling.

Power literally pours from the 4-cylinder 4-stroke engine. The transmission: 6-speed.

The suspension: Leading axle front air forks and a needle bearing suspended swing arm.

You'll also find new instrumentation, a slotted front disc brake and many other refinements for 1982.

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Front air forks: Provide great handling in corners and extra smoothness on the roughest roads.

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Harley-backed Goss broadslides his XR750

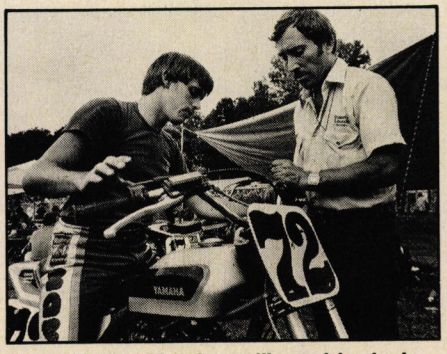
It's back to Milwaukee after letting the championship slide away.

26-race schedule, tied at 184 points apiece. Defending No. 1, Randy Goss, was the only other rider with a chance of upsetting them. Unfortunately for Goss, he all but eliminated himself the previous week when he disregarded a black flag in his transfer heat at the San Jose Mile. He was disqualified from the main, and so came to Ascot 18 points behind. His only chance was to win while Kidd and Scott earned either one point or no points at all.

The real pressure was on Kidd and Scott to face each other. Ironically, neither was considered a contender at the beginning of the season. Attention back then had been lavished on Harley-Davidson factory riders Jay Springsteen and Goss. They had the benefit of the factory's technology and money. Plus Springsteen was healthy and understandably unbeatable, while Goss displayed all the confidence of a defending champion.

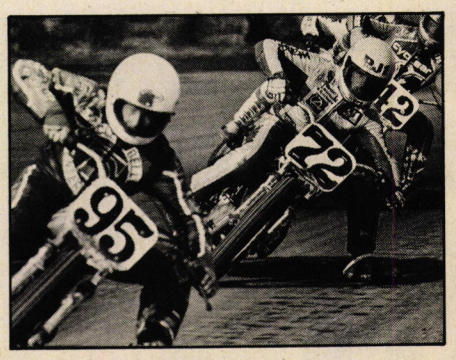
Paradoxically, Scott was dismissed as a threat to The Plate before the season even began because he was caught in the privateer's quagmire of turning his own wrenches, changing his own tires in between heats, chasing down sponsors in between seasons, transporting his own bike in between races and even performing such mundane tasks as cleaning his own faceshields before practice. Springsteen and Goss may clean their own shields, too, but they have factory mechanics for wrenching and tire changing, and a team manager to oversee the source for funds. All they have to worry about is which direction Turn One goes.

Yet it's not as if Scott was being forced to do things this way. He won The Plate in 1975 while riding for Harley, and had backing from Triumph prior to that. But Scott *prefers* to do things his own way, so he set out by himself on the Yellow Brick Road for his second No. 1 plate in 1976. It was a rough road, but he managed to finish second that year, proving to other privateers that it *could* be done. As he said later, "It gave a lot of other



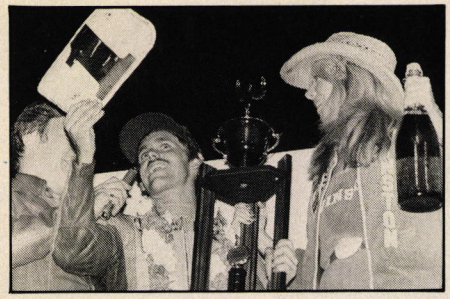
Mike Kidd and Mert Lawwill: semi-backed

And semi-loyal to Harley and Yamaha



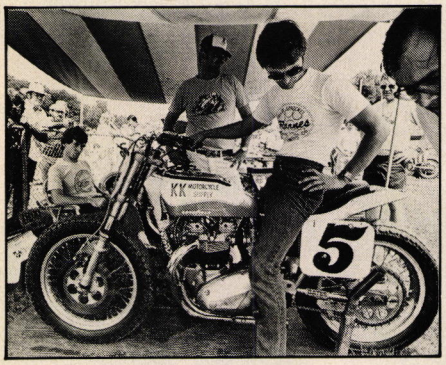
Kidd (72) drifts his Harley at Indy

The Lawwill-tuned XR loves the Mile



Say a few words, Champ.

"I owe it all to Yamaha's R&D."



Gary Scott ear-tuning his Triumph

Winning to beat a different drummer.

fellows a shot in the arm, and Steve Eklund proved a privateer could win when he pulled through in 1979."

And so as 1981 unfolded, Scott inched forward in the Winston Pro Series standings. The end of the Yellow Brick Road seemed near, and he eventually joined the ensuing tussle with Goss and Kidd.

Kidd's story for 1981 was slightly different than Goss' or Scott's. Riding for Roberts/Lawwill Racing, the 28-year-old, ten-year AMA veteran was neither privateer nor factory rider, but was originally contracted to develop the team's Yamaha XV750 for flat-tracking. Before the season began, Lawwill announced, "We were looking for a seasoned rider, good for feedback during R&D (of the Yamaha), since development is more important than winning."

But the XV750 development didn't go according to plan, and Kidd never qualified it for a main. Instead, the XV750 was ridden by Kidd's teammate and rookie-of-the-year, Jim Felice, and wallowed in Trophy Dashes.

Meanwhile Kidd rode Lawwill's XR750, a bike that was a potential front-row sitter at any oval track on the circuit. Not surprisingly, the combination of bike, rider and tuner put Kidd in several victory circles during the summer. As he tallied additional points during the season, Kidd receded farther from the sphere of research and development and closer to becoming AMA No. 1. As Kidd said on Ascot's victory podium when it was all over, "By mid-season we were up there (in the points race), and Mert just said, 'Go for it, ride the Harley.' So I did, and here we are with the No. 1 plate!"

—Dain Gingerelli

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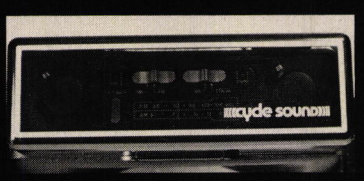

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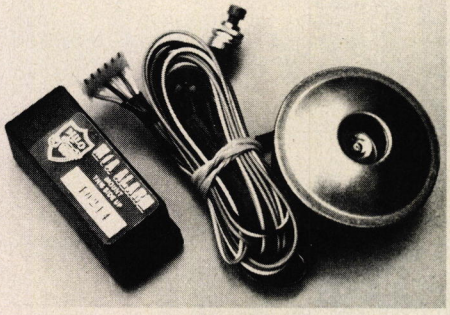

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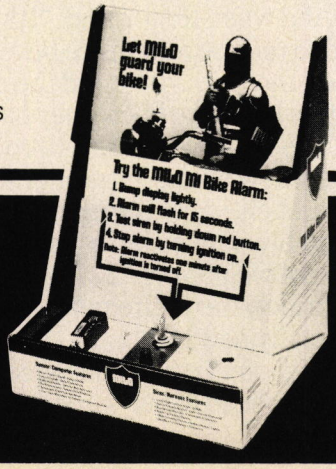

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FLATTRACKING:

Dash to the Trophy

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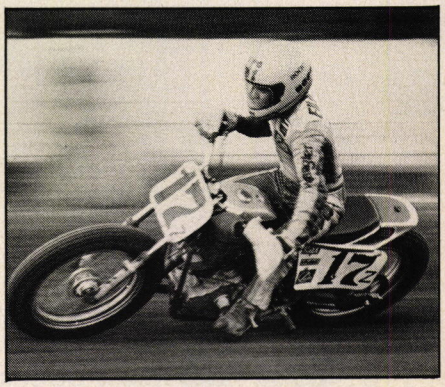
• Nobody cares for a Trophy Dash. It's the loser's race, a glorified consolation race for the riders who didn't make it into the main event. It's sometimes called the Gong Show, where nobody earns points, just a trophy and some cash. A little trophy and a little cash, at that.

The Ascot Trophy Dash proved to be the main event between the Honda factory bikes and Yamaha's representative to the roundy-rounds via Roberts/Lawwill Racing. Freddie Spencer, Ted Boody and Jeff Haney lined up

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 DAVID DEWHURST

Honda's Freddie Spencer and Ted Boody

Gong to the Trophy Dash.



Jim Filice qualifying for Trophy Dash

Only to be outnumbered by Honda.

with their CX750s, while rookie Jim Filice flew Yamaha's colors.

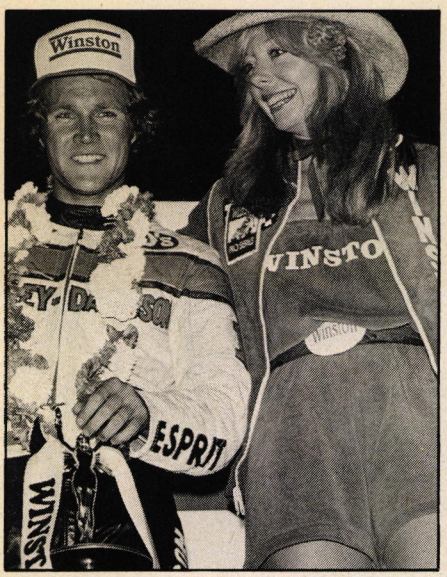
The Yamaha got blown away. And so, while Filice struggled with an ill-handling bike that featured yet *another* new chassis, Honda-mates Spencer and Boody finished second and third to Ronnie Jones' Harley. It was Honda's best Winston Pro Series finish for 1981. But still, no cigar.

Gong! —*Dain Gingerelli*

FLATTRACKING:

Randy Goss' Ascot

He can call it Square Thirteen.



Randy Goss winning his second Ascot

No. 1 proved to be unlucky.

• Randy Goss faced a losing battle at Ascot. He trailed Mike Kidd and Gary Scott by 18 points, and needed the 20-point win. But even more than that, he needed Kidd and Scott to cooperate by failing to finish with more than two points. Things looked dismal, for obvious reasons.

Even so, Goss had a near-perfect evening. He was one of the fastest qualifiers, set fastest heat time and started the main event from the pole. He led the entire race, too, with the exception of a few moments during the first lap while the pack got sorted out. Ascot belonged to Goss, and it was the first time any rider has won two half-miles there in the same year.

Ironically, he scored his first-ever AMA Grand National win at Ascot at the conclusion of the 1979 season, too. He wore number 13 then, and said after the race, "Well, I guess it's a lucky number for me after all." He continued wearing number 13 the following season in his bid for the No. 1 plate. Maybe now it's back to square 13 for Goss.

—Dain Gingerelli

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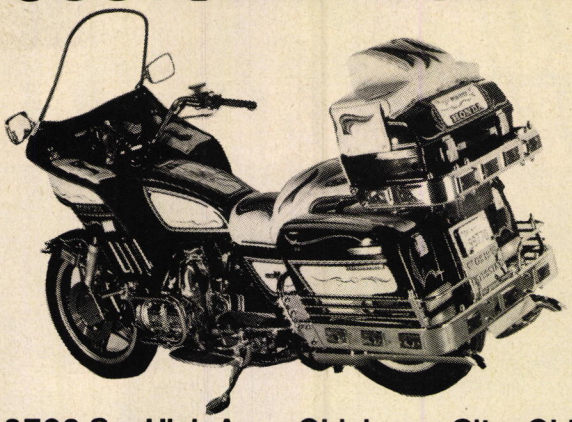

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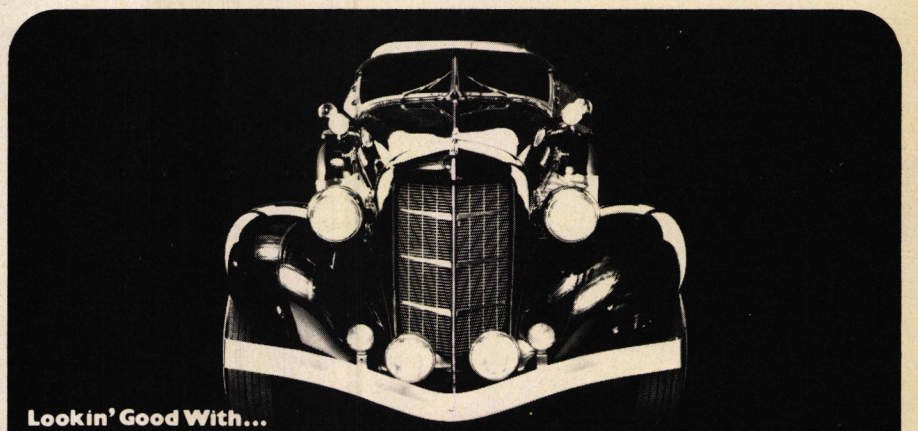

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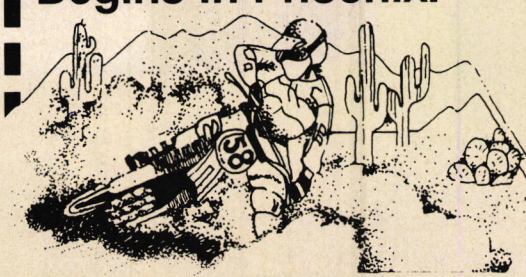

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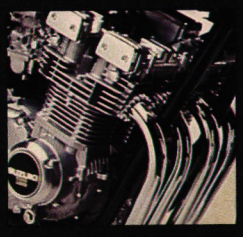

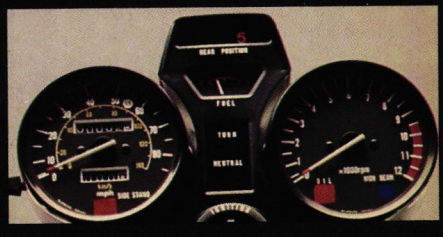

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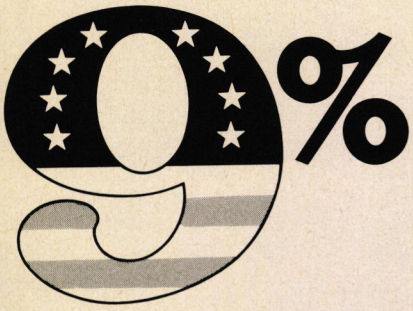

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FLATTRACKING:

Peoria TT

Half-mile with a jump.

• Daytona and Peoria have two things in common: They both are part of the AMA Grand National schedule and have been so since 1947. But while Daytona has evolved from a sandy beach course to the 31-degree banked superdrome it is today, Peoria is virtually the same as it was in the Fifties when Joe Leonard, Brad Andres and other early AMA greats banged handlebars on the bumpy Illinois track.

Peoria might be considered by some to be a throwback to the Fifties. Besides still being promoted by a local club, there are no grandstands. The place on the hillside where you plop your fanny is the place where you watch the race. And the PA system is like a motorcycle enthusiast's matchmaker, calling out to the hillsiders, "There's a fella here needin' a spark plug to fit a '57 Beezer—if he don't get one, he don't get home."

While that kind of ambience brings the fans closer to each other and to the racing, the racers themselves have a love/hate relationship with Peoria. Former AMA Number One, Gary Scott, describes it as a "physically demanding" race ... the "toughest track" on the Winston Pro tour. Steve Eklund denounces it as "grueling," but qualifies that statement by saying that Peoria also is a "rider's course." It's the kind of course that aggressive riders like Scott and Eklund prefer, since there is no single best line around the heavily oiled track. A rider can pick his own line to pass the opposition, guaranteeing good dicing for the spectators in the process.

Eklund sums up Peoria when he terms it "a half-mile with a jump." Because it's one of the fastest TTs on the Winston Pro circuit, all kinds of race equipment shows up in the pits for a National. Defending AMA champ Randy Goss, for example, rides a Harley XR750. It's big and clumsy for TT racing, but there's plenty of power in those Harley jugs to propel Goss down the straight. And although he doesn't have a choice of bikes—he's contracted to ride Harleys at every dirt race—he claims he'd pick an XR750 over anything else for this race, anyway.

In contrast, Eklund rides a Yamaha TT500 equipped with a motocross front fork. By using a lightweight chassis with a torquey en-

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Grandstanding at Peoria's bleachers

Where your seat's as good as the next.

Scott Parker and Sonny Burres at Peoria

Only Sonny is older than the track.

Randy Goss plays Thunder Road at Peoria

He claims big jugs are the secret.

Great Scott, it's Parker and Pearson

Pearson proved the greater Scott.

gine, not to mention the Bob Hannah-autograph fork, Eklund figures he can handle Peoria's half-mile speed and gnarly jump.

In between these two philosophies is Scott Pearson and his Yamaha 650 vertical twin. Pearson reasons that mixing the right amount of handling with an extra dollop of horsepower is the key to winning in Illinois. And you know something? It worked. Pearson won this year's Peoria TT, putting him in the same company with seven-time Peoria TT winner Joe Leonard, Kenny Roberts and other former half-mile-with-a-jump winners.

Because there is no single formula to winning here, the old-timers continue coming back to Peoria, too. This year's race had Sonny Burres who, at age 45, was perhaps the only rider on the grid with a birth certificate dated earlier than that of the track's. Burres wanted to be the oldest rider to win an AMA National. But he failed, finishing sixth.

Still, that doesn't matter; because as long as Burres remains healthy, he knows he'll always be able to come back to Peoria for another try. And another ... and another. Because Peoria will never change. It's the same as it was 34 years ago. —*Tom Riles*

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Sheene and the Scheckter Winter Cup

Fall guy for an out-clawsed event.

• Jody Scheckter finally got his Winter Cup Series into gear last September. The Series never developed into a series, though. It was a one-race meet at Donnington Park, England. The race was run in two 25-lap heats. Like the FIM events that it was intended to counter, controversy surrounded the "Series" after the checkered flag fell. Evidently there was some question as to who actually was to be declared champion. Each heat was won by a different rider, as Randy Mamola and Barry Sheene took turns at first place. But while Mamola came home as bridesmaid to Sheene, Sheene took only third-place in Mamola's victorious heat. So according to the Olympic scoring system commonly used in two-heat events, Mamola should have been declared the winner. But not so, said Scheckter. Sheene, he said, was the winner and champion. Scheckter's claim was based on using the aggregate time of the two heats in scoring the event. According to the stopwatches, Sheene's times for finishing first and third amounted to less than Mamola's combined times to win and take second. Mamola protested, and pretty soon nobody was sure who won. Mamola finally told Scheckter to give the trophy to Sheene—it wasn't worth the hassle. So Sheene, after one event, two heats and 50 laps, is the Scheckter Winter Cup Series Champion for 1981.

• One more luxury that winter affords us is the rumors that blow in from the north. In this case, let's talk about Honda. Our Tokyo connection tells us to be on the lookout for a new 500cc Honda at the GPs next year. It'll be easy to distinguish from the NR500, because this bike is a two-stroke. Yep, the company that made overhead camshafts a household phrase is tinkering with expansion chambers and transfer ports for roadracing. The reason for the two-stroke project is straightforward—Honda wants to win world championship roadraces. Although the NR500 shows promise in the hands of Freddie Spencer, it's still not a winner. A two-stroke, as Suzuki and Yamaha have proven, is. Honda won't drop the NR500 project, however, since it's looked upon by the corporate giant as necessary research and development. Spencer is still slated to ride it; but don't be surprised to see a two-stroke Honda next to it—or in front of it—on the GP grids.

Wait, there's more. We found out some interesting technical specifics about the bike, as well. It has three cylinders in vee configuration. Our techno-computer hints that the middle cylinder is angled forward, while the outer cylinders are vertical. There's still more! It's got fuel injection that squirts directly into the transfer ports. If all this sounds insane, you may want to refresh your memory with the early days of the NR500. Remember when we told you about its oval pistons? You laughed—then.

• If the two-stroke becomes reality, don't be surprised to see current 500cc world champion Marco Lucchinelli in Honda leathers. The Continental rumor has it that Giacomo Agostini, who's putting together his own roadrace team of Yamahas for 1982, offered Lucky Lucchinelli about $600,000 for a two-year contract. Luchinelli told the former world champion in so many words to take a flying leap—Honda had already offered him more than twice that amount.

• Europeans got a taste of American motocross medicine last September when the quartet of Danny LaPorte, Johnny O'Mara, Donnie Hansen and Chuck Sun dominated World Team events. The four Honda riders competed for the United States team in the Trophee des Nations in Belgium and the Motocross des Nations in West Germany.

Marco Lucchinelli—Honda-bound?

Or at least bound for lots of money.

LaPorte was high-point man for the Yanks in Belgium, scoring a 2–3 finish. O'Mara shared the honors as well, swapping finishing positions with LaPorte in the 250cc event and ending up 3–2 for the day. But it was Belgian Andre Vromans who won both heats.

The Americans didn't have it so easy at West Germany for the 500cc Motocross des Nations. LaPorte led the assault with a 6–2 dual-heat record, while O'Mara once again was second-highest point-getter for the U.S. team with a score of 2–13. Hansen did his fair share in West Germany scoring 11–8 while Sun, suffering from an injured ankle, had a poor day, placing twentieth in the first moto and crashing in the second. Even so, the Americans squeaked past the Great Britain team by one point, making a clean sweep of both World Team events. Hakan Carlqvist was the best individual rider at West Germany, winning both 500cc motos, but his Swedish compatriots did poorly, relegating the team effort to fifth overall.

• The other big motocross news from Europe involves Yamaha's Mike Bell. Too-Tall Bell won both heats of Europe's first major stadium motocross, which was held in Holland's Olympic Stadium. Bell, last year's stadiumcross champion, had little trouble with the Continental crowd, and chimed out back-to-back heat wins.

• Bruce Penhall's wish came true. He won the speedway World Final at Wembley Stadium, England. Penhall had a near-perfect evening, winning his first four heats, and finishing second in his fifth (and final) to cinch the World Championship title. But while it looks like a cakewalk for him according to the scorecard, things didn't work out quite that way. Penhall had to come from behind to beat former champion Ole Olsen, who led for three and three-quarter laps, but Penhall straightened his front wheel a moment sooner than the Dane, getting a better drive out of Turn Four to the checkered flag. He passed Olsen at the line and won, literally, by inches. It was one of the closest finishes in the history of the World Final.

Penhall's other tight moment occurred against another Dane, this time, Tommy Knudsen. Penhall trailed Knudsen by as much as 20 yards, and again only managed to pull it out of the hat in the last turn. So Bruce Penhall, age 24, became the first American World Speedway Champion since Jack Milne won the title for America in 1937. Olsen took second after a run-off heat with Knudsen.

• Penhall didn't rest when he returned to his California home. He immediately went to work at San Bernardino, putting in a perfect five-for-five evening to capture his first state championship. •

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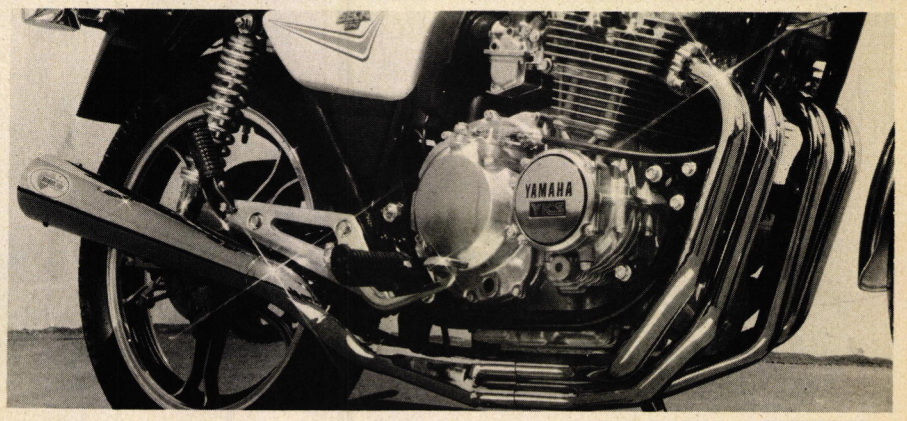

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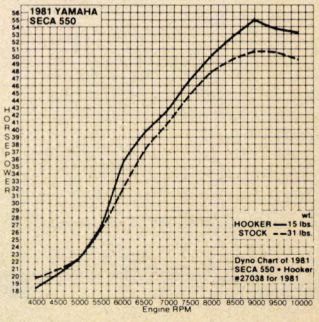

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MOTOCROSS:

Mid-Ohio USGP Swan Song

FIM says bye-bye to the Buckeye race.

• Mark Barnett won the final 125cc USGP. There will be no 1982 race. The FIM cancelled the United States round, and there's no reason to believe that there just won't be another 125cc USGP.

The FIM motocross committee voted to drop the Mid-Ohio classic for various reasons. For one thing, there are no American riders contesting the entire 125cc championship trail. The only time Yanks race in a world championship 125cc motocross is when the circus comes to town. And so, reasoned the motocross committee, why should everyone else travel clear across the Atlantic just so America can have its day of glory? A valid argument, even if it *is* flavored with sour grapes.

We can site American riders's recent surge in motocross competition as another basis for the removal of the USGP. It's a fact—Americans now dominate their home territory on the GP scene. During the past two seasons, all three GPs—Carlsbad, Unadilla and Mid-Ohio—have been won by Americans. So the Europeans come over for a few championship points and second-place money. Not a worthwhile business to be in when you consider it takes thousands of dollars to transport rider, bike, mechanic and spares for one race. In fact, less than ten foreign riders lined up on the Mid-Ohio starting line last July.

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 TOM RILES

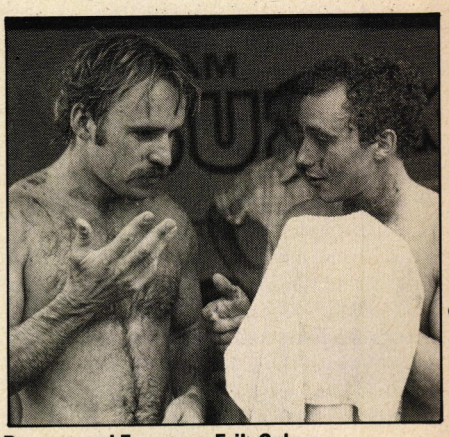
Mark Barnett winning rain-drenched USGP

FIM washes calendar clean of event.

Further, when the race is over, the American press throws tomatoes at the European riders for losing to a bunch of kids who look like they belong in Big Mac and Clearasil commercials rather than on motocross bikes. What the press fails to realize is that the Europeans have to travel a long distance, sometimes competing on bikes that are slightly different than the equipment they use the rest of the season. That, coupled with being in a strange country, can make it difficult for them to maintain the level of competitive spirit that they're accustomed to while hopping from one small country in Europe to the next.

If you're getting the idea that the Europeans don't like coming to America for just a single GP, you've made it through Turn One. They don't. For instance, Neil Hudson, 250cc world champion, says the Americans race wildly, and many of the 125cc-class riders agree.

But perhaps the biggest factor in dropping the Mid-Ohio classic, and potentially Unadilla, is the Americans' attitude towards



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 SPORT GRAPHICS

Barnett and European Erik Geboers

"Right, Mark. You won, but USA lost."

World Team events. It's no secret the Europeans view the Trophee des Nations and the Motocross des Nations with a crazed glare in their eyes—just as Americans worship the World Series of Superbowl Sunday. To them, World Team events climax the season of motocross racing. It's a time to pit the best four riders from qualifying countries in the same arena. And in two 40-minute motos, they get to see just who the best *really* is. To Americans, it's just another trip they have to make across the Atlantic—The same trip the Europeans had to make in order to line up on the Mid-Ohio starting line. And because Americans have participated on only two occasions, the Europeans and the FIM consider their behavior an insult to the sport.

Now that the Mid-Ohio has been dropped, it's time the Americans earn a place in the 125cc, USGP sun. We made progress in joining the rest of the motocross world when we won both rounds of the World Team events last September. But perhaps the next step is to put more than just two Yanks on the Continent for a full year's racing. As it stands, only Mike Guerra and Brad Lackey are full-time employees on the championship trail. If we can get more racers like them, maybe we'll be able to have another 125cc USGP. And then Mark Barnett can win his second USGP.

— *Dain Gingerelli*

Continued

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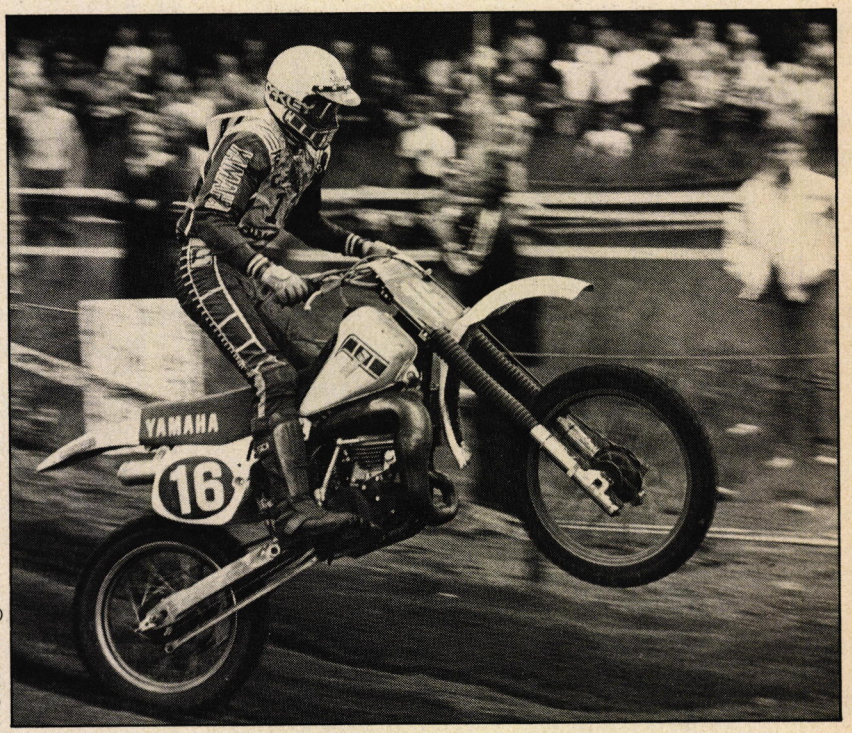

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Neil Hudson finally finds the formula

His Yamaha kicks up in delight.

• Neil Hudson believes that perseverance nourishes success. And in the case of the 250cc motocross world championship, he's right. Hudson played catch-up to defending 250-champ Georges Jobe all year. The Suzuki rider clearly had the horsepower edge on Hudson's factory Yamaha from the beginning of the season. All Hudson could do opening day was dodge dirt that was thrown in Jobe's wake.

Hudson persevered, though. But the harder he rode to catch Jobe, the harder Jobe rode to remain in front. And every time it appeared the white Yamaha was getting up to speed with the yellow Suzuki, Jobe & Co. pulled out more power, and with it more speed.

But even with a handful of mechanical DNFs, Hudson persevered, figuring that placing second to Jobe was better than crashing by trying to outride the Belgian's horsepower edge. Second-place points are better than no points at all when a championship is being chased. And in the back of Hudson's mind, he knew the power would come. He just had to wait.

It came, thanks to his tuner, Bill Buchka. Buchka whittled and polished a special race cylinder and piston, and by mid-season, found the elusive horsepower needed to catch Jobe. Hudson first raced with the Buchka Special at the British GP. As he said after his initial outing on the new engine, "It felt like a 500!" Translated, this means he was ready to throw a few dirt clods Jobe's way.

Although Hudson fell in the first moto at Hawkstone Park in England, this race proved to be the turning point in the 250-championship season. Not only did Jobe fail to finish too, but Hudson left with the psychological advantage, for he knew his bike was capable of beating Jobe's. And to a racer who's in the points hunt, that's worth additional horsepower.

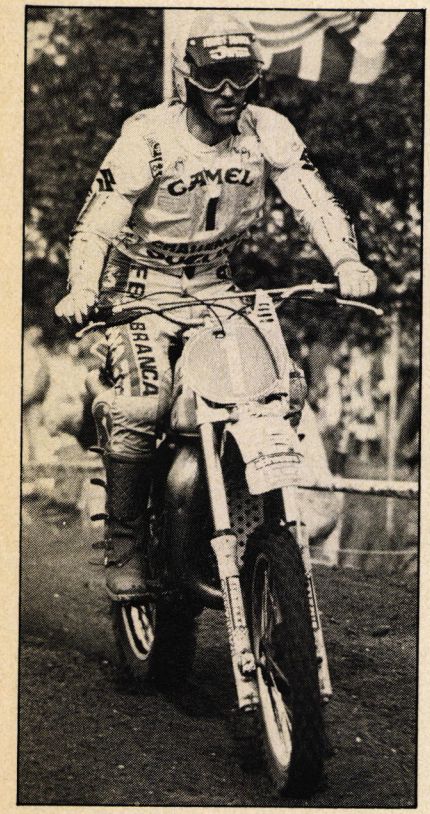
But it was at the USGP that Hudson made his deepest thrust at Jobe. The defending champ had made a foolish mistake the week before the Unadilla showdown: He fell during a Belgium national championship race. And the injury he sustained was enough to keep him from competing in America.

Hudson went on to place second in both motos, gaining 24 points in the process. And while he capitalized at the USGP,

Hudson was unwilling to share any points at the Russian GP, either. He aced both motos there, and went to the Dutch GP—the final race—ready to pounce on both Jobe and the world title.

Hudson had his Hawkstone bike but Jobe had the support of the crowd. The championship hung delicately in the balance. First, Hudson stalled his bike in the first moto, and had to work his way to fourth. He needed to finish seventh or better in the second moto—the final moto of the season—to wrap up the title. He blasted off the line, then was caught in a pile-up that twisted his handlebar and damaged his throttle grip. Suddenly the entire season looked dark for him. But in the Hudson-1981 tradition, he persevered, catching Jobe and finishing sixth. He managed to win the championship with two points to spare.

Hudson was on top of the world, but he had lost a far more costly battle. After a year of courtroom fighting, Maico, Hudson's former sponsor, was awarded $50,000 in damages from the new champion's wallet. In his eagerness to join Yamaha, the young Englishman had broken his contract with the German factory and faced almost total financial ruin. But his new sponsor, overjoyed with its new world title, stepped forward with a $50,000 "bonus." The never-say-die champion came through again. —*Dain Gingerelli*



Former 250cc world champ, Georges Jobe

Hudson looked back and saw this.

500cc World Championship

Roger DeCoster is still The Man.

• Andre Malherbe has a special formula for winning at motocross. According to 1979 500cc world champ, Graham Noyce, Malherbe lets the pack sort out into the first turn, then rides slowly for about three laps as a further safety precaution against wild riders. Then, after everybody's adrenaline subsides to sub-toxic levels, he "squirts" out in front. When that happens it's difficult staying with him. He proved that in 1980.

Noyce took the same basic approach this year, starting the season carefully on his comeback from a knee injury that sidelined him in 1980. The husky blond from England who is also Malherbe's teammate, elected to use 1981 as a warm-up year to get back into top form, to help him springboard to the 1982 world title. But his plan backfired when he crashed at the first round in Austria. Another disastrous season loomed ahead. Rather than choking, he maintained the smooth and steady course he chose to follow for the comeback. And by doing this, he hoped to finish the season in third place. He figured Suzuki's Brad Lackey or Yamaha-mounted Hakan Carlqvist would finish second while the title itself appeared to still belong to Malherbe. Noyce hoped for just a small piece of the pie this year.

Somebody forgot to clue-in Malherbe that this was to be a runaway season for him, though. Just by being consistent, Noyce found himself in the driver's seat at various stages of the year. Further, Malherbe suffered minor injuries that plagued him all year. Consequently, the points race became erratic, with Noyce and Malherbe tossing the lead back and forth as if it were a bomb with a short fuse.

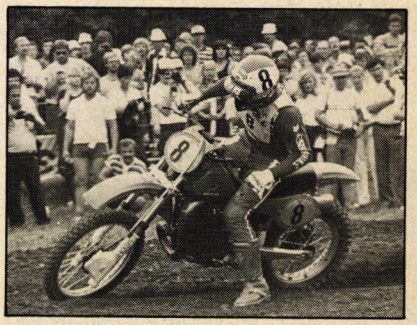
And even though the race appeared close according to the points tally, Noyce and Malherbe seldom locked into a good ol' fashioned dogfight on the track. There was little wheel-to-wheel combat between them—the kind of racing that makes a close points chase so exciting. And so the season seemed to drone on, with the only dicing appearing on paper. Even Lackey, a perennial contender, couldn't take advantage of Malherbe's and Noyce's lethargic season.

Malherbe finally put enough pearls on the string to win his second straight championship, but it wasn't a show of force by him that did it. In the end, Team Honda proved that *it*, more than any of its riders, is the dominant force in the prestigious 500cc class of motocross racing. And Malherbe himself traces that fact to The Man—Roger De Coster. Malherbe says about the former-champ-turned-team-manager, "I think Roger is the main force of the motocross team. He has good contact with the factory and they react quickly to the things he asks for."

As the saying goes, if you don't see it, ask. Malherbe apparently didn't see the championship this year, but De Coster did, and asked for him. —*Dain Gingerelli*

Graham Noyce and Andre Malherbe

500cc champs toast first—and second.



Noyce on his Honda for comeback year

Suddenly the championship was close.

Malherbe after three laps

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LETTERS

Dreambikes, Clothesed Cases, and Playing Favorites.

TURBOTASTE

Several years ago, while I was still living in San Jose, I was taking one of my escape-the-madness-of-the-city cruises along Skyline Boulevard when I met a fellow riding a three-cylinder BSA (I was on a Trident). I was about to write the guy off as a motormouth with no brain attached when he launched into his theory of why European motorcycles are superior to Japanese makes. European bikes, he opined, are generously endowed with an ethereal quality he chose to call "romance." Now don't get me wrong. I'm a big fan of Japanese engineering and reliability (after owning that Trident, my admiration grew considerably) but the truth of the matter is that your typical "rice burner," technological wonder that it may be, is an intellectual creation with a remarkable lack of input from any other portion of the anatomy (as opposed to your typical H-D, which seems to be conceived, engineered, produced and marketed from a point about six inches below the navel). The Ducati has romance and the Honda does not. . . . So what's all this leading up to? Well, I'll tell you, friends, there is nothing more boring to this reader than a brand of mentality that focuses on one-dimensional go-faster "Because fast is never fast enough," twin-turbo, 175 mph Flash, Bam, Kazam. . . . Let's blast past this attitude that ignores the multiplicity of ways a human being can relate to a machine that's as complex and dynamic as a motorcycle. Please, in the future, stick to bikes that appeal to a broader kind of experience and a more mature (not necessarily sedate) mentality.

Walter E. Strong
Chico, California

You obviously weren't sufficiently bored not to read the story, though. Case closed—ed.

LOVE/HATE RELATIONSHIPS

Would you send me some information about the Suzuki GS1000 Katana? I think this is the best-looking bike you have made. Would you put in the information how much the bike would cost?

Wayne Libby
Lake Wales, Florida

We appreciate your thoughts, but we can't take any credit for making the Katana—Suzuki deserves all of that—ed.

Enjoyed your October issue. A few comments, if you don't mind. Suzuki's Katana is the ugliest thing on wheels since the Suzuki RE-5 . . . which was the ugliest

© 1981 RANDY STUART

thing on wheels since the famed "water buffalo" . . . wait a minute. I'm picking up a pattern. Remember the last grey-framed production motorcycle, folks? You got it! The unmourned BSA models of 1971 went from one of the biggest sellers to oblivion in a year.

Really enjoyed your test of Yamaha's XV920. Having ridden one, I agree with you 100 percent. GOD, do I hate those swirly wheels! Keep up the good work.

Richard Creed
Sturgis, South Dakota

WINDOW SHOPPERS

To inform you of my attitude about the Harley: I have never owned or even ridden one, but I love their fighting sound. I would buy one if I dared ride without a helmet, could grow a long, black beard and do emergency repairs by the roadside.

Bob Strickland
Citrus Heights, California

Nowadays, Harley-Davidsons even seem to tolerate riders who wear helmets and no beards—ed.

In your October 1981 issue, you tested an XV920RH Yamaha and listed a Harley Tour Glide in your comparative test data. Why not match your Yamaha up with an H-D Sportster—which happens to be more than a second faster in the quarter-mile than the 920—and gets at least 10 more miles out of a gallon of gasoline?

I bought an XL1000 new in 1980 and find it to be reliable, durable, fast and nimble. Yet, you have not tested a Harley-Davidson motorcycle in ten years. Everyone I know who owns a Japanese bike admires mine and would trade up if they had

Continued

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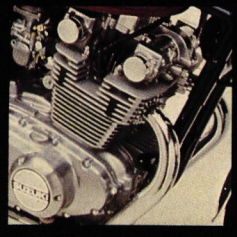
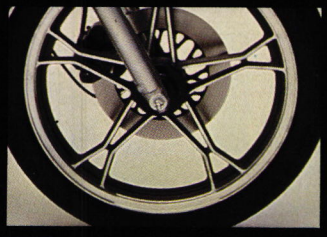
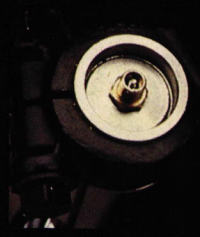


Front disc brake: A standard feature, along with new-style mag-type wheels.



Front air forks: Provide better handling and ride under all conditions.



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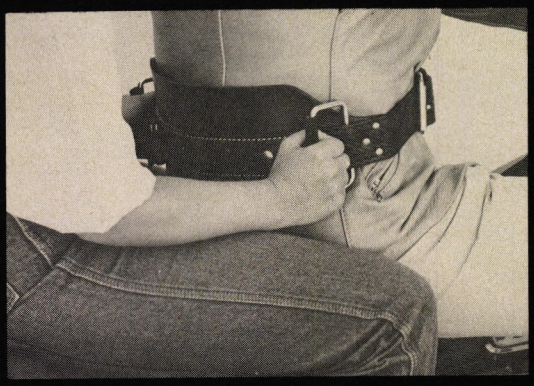

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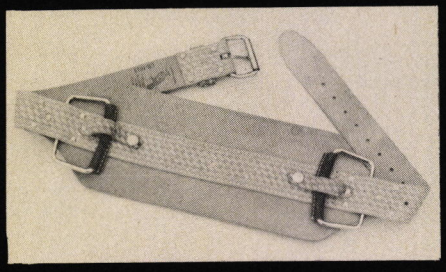

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LETTERS

the bread. I'm sure there must be lots of reader interest in the only American bike.

William Berwick
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Not only have you missed a number of H-D tests in ten years, you missed the intention of the XV920—ed.

DO NOT FLUSH

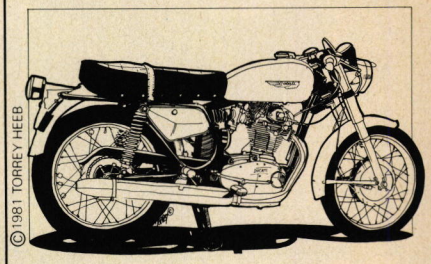
To start, I think your magazine's great, from cover to cover. But in response to Mr. Bruce E. Anderson on the CBX vs R100RS, and although everyone is entitled to his own opinion, he went a little too far when he said that Honda produced nothing but dispose-a-bikes.

I ride a '73 750 Honda that has 22,000 miles on it, but that's only a start. A friend rides a '71 750 with 28,000 miles. Another friend has a '75 750 with 25,000 miles, and yet another has a '74 750 with 50,000 miles . . . all on Hondas. No one has gone into the engine.

Please tell me how he figures they are dispose-a-bikes.

Leo Talbot, Jr.
Cochranton, Pennsylvania

Like you said, it's his opinion; and just having one of those never made anyone right—ed.



PROP WASH

Please refer to the letter from Mr. Bob Strickland of Citrus Heights, California, which appears on page 102 of your September 1981 issue. Mr. Strickland states that his sidestand will not allow him to park on even a slight downgrade without the motorcycle folding.

While meditating on this problem for all of 10 seconds, I was suddenly struck with a vision that offers a simple solution to his recurring problem. Unless I am misreading this letter, it would seem that Mr. Strickland's adversity to downgrade parking could be alleviated by simply turning the bike around, thus parking on a slight upgrade. If this situation should cause illegal parking, simply cross the street and park. Please feel free to contact me if any further assistance is needed.

Joe Zinn
Cross City, Florida

Mr. Honda would like to know your salary requirements; he has an opening in his sidestand department—ed.

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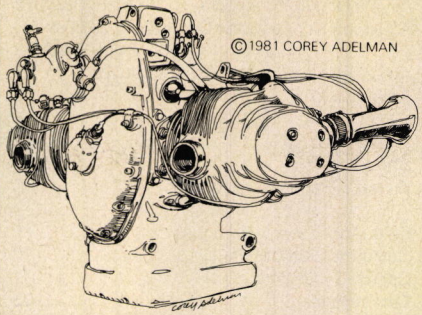
LETTERS



AD PAGE OUTRAGE

The center spread ad on pages 48–49 of your July '81 issue is in such startlingly bad taste that I'm given to wonder if your advertising manager is on the payroll of your competition! It is this kind of cavalier attitude to the sensitivities of the community at large that results in such bad press for motorcyclists generally. Why you should choose to compromise the integrity of your otherwise superb magazine in such demeaning fashion is beyond me. Be assured that further lapses in the discretion of your advertising policy will result in the immediate cancellation of my subscription and, I daresay, thousands of others.

D. Corbett
New York, New York

GRAND DESIGNS

I'm surprised at all the hoopla concerning the KZ1000J (*CG*, February '81). I give Kawasaki credit for finally graduating from the Suzuki school of total performance, but I'm at a loss as to why they've received such high honors. The bottom line seems to be that you guys are in love with the KZ engine and its "Z-1 personality." I'll grant you that the Z-1 had personality, for whatever that's worth, but I certainly dispute the claim that the KZ is in far better high performance shape than any other literbike. Aside from its reed-valve system, the KZ doesn't really have anything over Suzuki's GS1000.

Compared to the original Z-1, the KZ1000J may indeed be an accomplishment. But in terms of summing up the lessons of the Seventies—comfort, good handling, good power-to-weight ratio—let's give credit where credit is due. Suzuki not only summed them up, they did it in 1977 with the GS750. Some four years later, there's plenty of us who aren't about to turn in our GS one-liter membership cards. Talk about roots, that's roots.

R.P. Shaw
Newton, New Jersey

Uproots. The chain-drive GS1000 has been shafted, save the S-model due late this summer, if then—ed. ●

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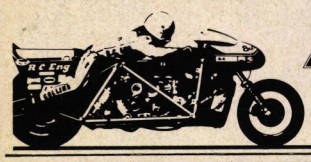

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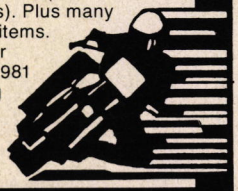

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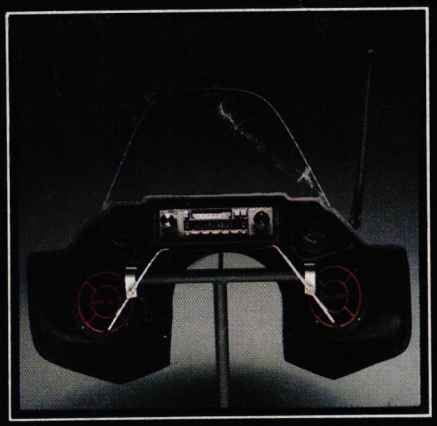
HEAD-
WAY
We met yesterday
between signal changes.
She rolled down her window asking for directions,
I flipped up my shield and asked for her name.
Well today we're making headway together
beneath our light, comfortable
and very affordable
Shoei S-27 Helmets!
SHOEI
SHOEI
SHOEI
Shoei Helmets./1717 Pontius Street
Los Angeles, California 90025

It used to be if you didn't want a frame-mounted fairing, you had to choose between eating bug splat or putting a clear plastic barn door on your bike.

That was before Vetter made the Rooster.™

Its aerodynamic design gives riding comfort without compromising handling or sporty styling. Made of the same construction materials as the Windjammer. So you know it's built to last.

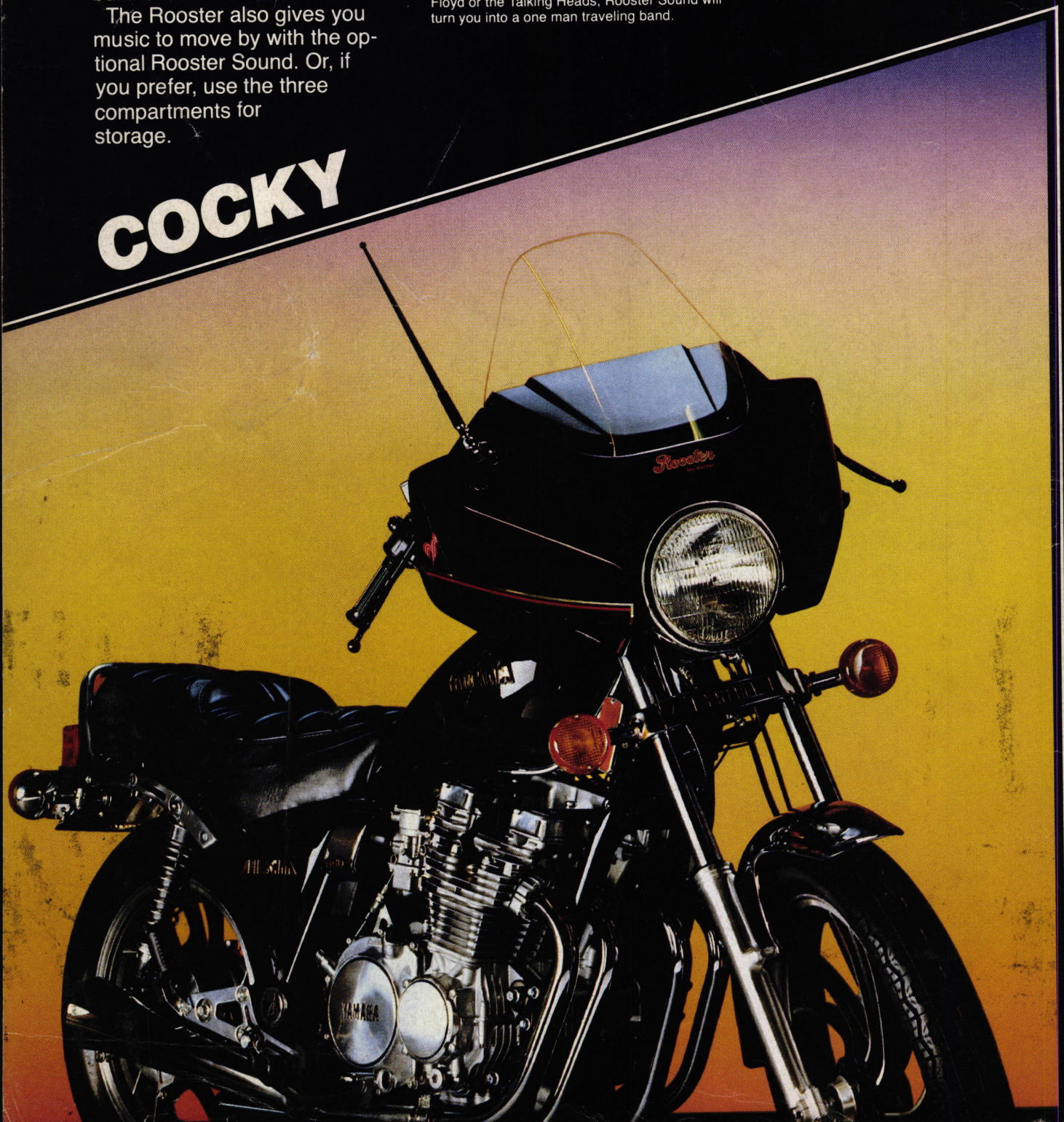
The Rooster also gives you music to move by with the optional Rooster Sound. Or, if you prefer, use the three compartments for storage.



*Whether you move with Willie Nelson, Pink Floyd or the Talking Heads, Rooster Sound will turn you into a one man traveling band.

Only $129 at your Vetter dealer. So get cocky. Take 10 minutes to put a Rooster on your bike and live a little.

Rooster

by VETTER
Rantoul, Illinois
217/893-9300

COCKY